

CHINA INSIDE OUT

Edited Pál Nyíri and Joana Breidenbach



**Contemporary Chinese Nationalism
& Transnationalism**

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Contemporary Chinese Nationalism and Transnationalism

edited by

Pál Nyíri and Joana Breidenbach



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Overview

For over a decade, scholars, universities, and research funding bodies have been debating the usefulness of area studies. Heir to a Western tradition of studying non-Western societies that became systematized as a by-product of colonialism, area studies in the way we know them are a Cold War artifact. Symbolically, their birth can be dated to the 1958 National Defense Education Act that provided funding for producing knowledge on areas of the world important to the United States' security. Although in the subsequent decades, the link between American political agenda and the contents of area studies research essentially disappeared, the very organization of knowledge into politically defined geographic areas came under increasing criticism as irrelevant with the end of the Cold War and the rise of postcolonial studies and globalization theories. Essentially, the intellectual and institutional debate has been taking place along two fault lines: (1) problem-oriented versus space-oriented organization of knowledge; (2) locally specific explanations versus global theories of social change. There have been proposals to obviate the first question by redefining spatial categories of area studies based on observed social processes and allow them to shift correspondingly, instead of using permanent boundaries defined by presumed cultural traits. Most prominently, such a call has been made by anthropologist Arjun Appadurai (2001).

A contextual definition of "areas"

The authors of this text believe that "areas" as assemblages of social processes requiring distinct, culture-bound explanations cannot be replaced with global theories, but that the meaning of "the area" can be different depending on the question one studies. The study of China and Chinese, in particular, is a good arena to challenge the disciplinary and geographic boundaries of conventional area studies for several reasons. First, because of the wealth of simultaneous processes of rapid political, social, and discursive change in contemporary Chinese society. Second, because of the problematic relationship between state, territory, nation, and ethnicity in China. Third, because China studies, perhaps more than any other area studies at the moment, are a highly competitive political and academic industry whose internal working must be critically examined. In addition, the subject of China has become one of the primary loci of contesting the meanings of globalization and the universality versus relativity of "values" and modernity.

The last decade has seen a major shift in the focus of the study of China in the West, with issues of contemporary politics and society coming to the foreground. This has partly been driven by policy and business interest in practical understanding, as the arrival of the “Asian century” was first proclaimed and then put into question by the 1997 “currency crisis.” Culturalist explanations for the momentous strides in the development of East Asian economies gained popularity, then came under attack when the performance of those economies faltered. Most belonged to the beneficiaries and eager participants in globalizing economic and cultural processes, but while some moved gradually to plural, democratic systems, others became increasingly autocratic. Understanding the reasons requires the deconstruction of the Western concept of China and a look at the diverse but connected processes that are eroding and strengthening nation-state ideologies at once. Central among the issues of relevance here are those of nationalism and transnationalism.

The debate on the future of, and alternatives to, the nation-state has been a central issue in political science and sociology in the post-Cold War period. This includes a renewed interest in diasporas, studies of business and religious networks, and a rapidly emerging field of studies on transnationalism, a practice of simultaneous engagement in the discourses of belonging of two or more nation-states.

Nationalism and transnationalism as geography-shaping processes

Despite all talk about the demise of the nation-state, the post-Cold War period has seen reemergence, strengthening, and/or reassessment of nationalisms across the world. Apart from Eastern Europe, the most dramatic processes of this kind have been taking place in Asia. The Chinese Communist government, replacing a class-based discourse of belonging, has introduced a triumphalist discourse of deterritorialized Chineseness, composed of a traditionalist emphasis on essentialized cultural values, early-twentieth-century racial nationalism, and business-school “Rimspeak” celebrating the success of Chinese businesses. “Cultural Chineseness” is on the rise among ethnic Chinese outside China, aided not only by the economic attractiveness of China and the patriotic rhetoric of its government, but also by the encouragement of ethnic Chinese by many governments to translate their Chineseness into business skill. While constant references are made to the nation, the content of cultural Chineseness is shifting away from native place and kinship group toward the practice of transnational business. Both ruling elites and those opposed to them are, in many ways, benefiting from globalization processes, but also clash with and are subverted by them. Both established diasporas and new migrants are addressed and sometimes mobilized by government discourses of patriotism and development. A stream of new migration from China and the growth of global Chinese media is amplifying and mainstreaming the imaginary of “globally modern Asians.” A complicated array of transnational practices and “imagined communities” has emerged, but, unlike what is often assumed, they are not always cosmopolitan and antinationalist. How are such practices subverting or strengthening old nationalisms and creating new ones? How are minorities in China reacting to the changing discourse of Chineseness? How are nationalism and xenophobia in China’s neighbors and historic and strategic adversaries and destination countries of Chinese migration affected, and what chances are there for new regionalisms?

A non-linear text

Contributors to the project move in, out and around China, geographically and methodologically, and interrogate social behaviors, links and flows, texts, images and policies to answer to these questions. In parallel to that, they interrogate their own research methods and relate them to other ways of studying society, and engage critically with the limitations and possibilities of mainstream Anglo-American social research and potential complementary traditions.

The multiplicity and reflexivity of approaches is intended to help the reader develop new perspectives and see unexpected connections. The way this text is organized is meant to facilitate this process. Instead of the linear reading of a conventional textbook, the design of this text invites the juxtaposition of different trains of thought. The chapter by George Marcus reads at a different “level”: it interrogates the *China Inside Out* project itself.

This project started as a 2001 summer course at Central European University, Budapest. We decided to keep some of the directness of the spoken language and reproduce parts of the lectures and discussions within the chapters. Some of them therefore read decidedly more colloquial than conventional scholarly literature, conveying a sense of dynamism and ongoing debate.

Chapters

Anthropological Concepts for the Study of Nationalism

Aihwa Ong

This chapter discusses the formation of anthropological concepts that offer tools to deal with nationalism and transnationalism in the world of nation-states and beyond, as well as with anthropological fieldwork. It opens with an introduction to the anthropological perspective and goes on to discuss the ideas of print capitalism and imagined communities and concepts of contemporary globalization. It then looks at the differences between the dynamics of modernization in the “West” and the “non-West”, including the differing relationships between the contemporary state’s national project and the definition of tradition; the moral economy of Asian nations; and the “Asian values” discourse. The module finishes with examining flexible accumulation and flexible citizenship among Chinese transnationals.

The Legacy of Empires and Nations in East Asia

Prasenjit Duara

This chapter deals with problems of national identity and “sovereignty” in the transition from empire to nation-state from the historian’s standpoint. On what principles did premodern Chinese polities govern the communities they ruled and how did they legitimate themselves? What kinds of political identifications were produced in the empire? What were the relationships between political and nonpolitical forms of identification in these polities? What was the relationship between centers and frontiers?

What was the impact of the emergent nation-state system on 20th-century China and how were both of the principles of governance (the sovereignty question) and of the nature of identification transformed? How did new citizens view their political identity in relation to a territorial “geo-body”? What happened to older frontier regions and peoples? What happened to the older universalist (often religious) aspirations and identities?

Researching Chinese Nationalism: the Foreign Relations Dimension

Daojiong Zha

This chapter starts with situating the issue of Chinese nationalism in international relations (IR) research and querying the terms commonly used in this context. It reviews the most-discussed questions discussed by IR researchers and policy analysts in regard of Chinese nationalism—including nationalism versus national interest, Taiwan and Tibet, and border disputes—but challenges the reader to be critical towards accepted explanations and calls attention to the question of who speaks for China.

On the Periphery of the “Clash of Civilizations?” Discourse and Geopolitics in Russo-Chinese Relations

Alexander V. Lomanov

This chapter looks at the development of interactions between post-Soviet Russia and China from a threefold perspective. First, it examines the ambivalent role of Russia and China in the formulation of each other’s “national ideas” by various elites. Second, it discusses the geopolitical realities of economy, migration, border disputes, and regional/central power rivalries in the Far Eastern provinces of Russia and the north-eastern provinces of China. Finally, it analyses the tensions between the discourses at the centers and the agendas of the peripheries.

Minorities, Homelands and Methods

Louisa Schein

This chapter starts with an introduction to key anthropological concepts in the research of transnationalism, diasporas, and migration. It then deconstructs China as a society with complex, multilayered ethnicities whose sub-national groups include “minorities” (non-Han ethnic groups) and “latent” ethnicities within the Han. Turning to transnationalism, the module discusses the case of the Miao/Hmong, an ethnic group now found in China, Southeast Asia, and the United States. The following part looks, on the example of the author’s “itinerant ethnography” of the Miao, at research methods and anthropological fieldwork applied to transnationalism. Finally, the chapter examines the role of media in transnationalism and the anthropologist’s approach to media studies.

The “New Migrant”: State and Market Constructions of Modernity and Patriotism

Pál Nyíri

This chapter starts with a review of overseas Chinese and emigration policy in the PRC since 1949, focusing on the changing relations of overseas Chinese with the PRC and the changing meaning of Chineseness as it is instrumentalized in these relations. The next part discusses migration from China since 1978 and the policies and discourse of patriotism developed around it. The third part of the chapter then focuses on how globalized worlds of media, migrant organizational elites, and academics co-produce the imagery of global Chineseness overseas with the PRC government.

Race in China

Frank Dikötter

This chapter traces how “race” has been used at various stages of the 20th century Chinese nationalist discourse to draw the boundaries of the Chinese nation and to rationalize real and imagined differences between population groups. It looks at the origins of racial differentiation, its formulation in modern terms under the influence of Western theories accompanying the transition to nation-state, and the use of racial discourse in the biopolitics of the Republic and the People’s Republic.

Outside In: Sino-Burmese Encounters

Penny Edwards

This chapter looks at the role of religion and ethnicity in the state construction of bilateral relations between China and Burma, and how the constructs of national identity are manipulated by the states (and rival centers of power) in the course of their changing relationship. How do these constructs, reinforced by boundaries, clash or overlap with local ethnic and religious identities as well as with everyday cross-border practices? The chapter approaches history as a series of parallel fragments, a plurality of voices, glimpsing the past from different, often awkward and restricted angles, so that what we become most aware of is that which is always hidden and resists the linear interrogations of Western historiographic enquiry.

Alterity Motives

Dru C. Gladney

Using the example of three Muslim ethnic groups—the Hui, the Uyghur, and the Kazak—this chapter focuses on the construction of minority identifications in China. “Hui” is originally a generic name for Chinese-speaking Muslims; the Uyghur are the titular nationality of China’s northwestern administrative region; and the Kazak are

the nation-forming ethnic group of neighboring Kazakhstan. The chapter looks at the role of the Han majority in defining the identities of these groups; the function of the imaging of minorities for the self-definition of the Han; minorities' resistance to, acceptance or manipulation of those images; and the flexible use of identifications the author calls "relational alterity".

The Contemporary Intellectual Context of the China Inside Out Project

George E. Marcus

This is a commentary on the intellectual approaches *China Inside Out* takes and the pedagogical possibilities it opens. The author discusses how the project arises from earlier critiques of area studies, in what ways it differs from them, and to what future directions it points. The chapter thus reads at a different level from the others, helping the reader make sense of them.

Expressions in boldface are explained in the Glossary and in the list of Main Chinese Dynasties.

The editors thank Katalin Hegyi for her expert assistance with the preparation of this manuscript.

Chapter 1

Anthropological Concepts for the Study of Nationalism

AIHWA ONG

The anthropological perspective

China has been a very unique subject of study. There tends to be no comparative aspect to how we approach China and perhaps a kind of reluctance to apply to it a social theory that is developed in other parts of the world. I think it is extremely important to have that kind of comparative aspect in order to be engaged in a conversation about what China is like in other parts of the world.

Dikötter on Ong's chapter

This lecture contains a whole panoply of notions that are very popular in cultural anthropology. Even if you feel a bit overwhelmed by the number of names and concepts, it is very useful to pay attention to them. You also have an opportunity to see how anthropologists think and work, the sort of knack anthropologists have for deconstructing all sorts of things that we considered to be unproblematically natural.

It is undeniable that anthropology has had the biggest impact on other fields of social research since the 1980s–90s. The whole **postmodernism** is very much fueled by what anthropologists have developed in the last 10–20 years. I also use the notion of denaturalization: to denaturalize the nation or culture means no longer to see them as fairly unproblematic givens that you can more or less classify and examine, pretty much like an entomologist will look at different sorts of insects. You have to have that sort of anthropological reflexivity, a self-reflection in examining the very basic units of analysis that you deploy in your own world. There is no way escaping anthropology. That was possibly the case 10–20 years ago, but it no longer is the case. Even in the so-called hard economics no one would be a fool to think that you can more or less ignore this sort of cultural anthropological insights.

This chapter will first talk about anthropology, which is my discipline, and present my approach to the subjects of the nation, nationalism, and transnationalism.

Techniques of being human

Anthropology is fundamentally the study of humanity in terms of the techniques that make us human. And when we talk about techniques, we mean a whole range of things: mechanical techniques like stone tool-making as well as poetry, religion, morality that people make up for themselves. So, anthropology is in fact the study of the different ways of life in history and around the world. By looking at the different ways, we constitute ourselves as human beings, and the ways our technologies shape our lives and values, we can address issues of what is at stake for humanity as a whole.

Relativism: contextualization of subjectivity

You will often hear the term “relativism.” Early anthropologists have been criticized for applying their ideas of being human to others. An anthropologist, an upper-class American, in the Brazilian jungle? This is crazy! Today, anthropology wants to appreciate the different ways in which people imagine and make their lives. In other words, to deconstruct “human nature.” There is no such thing as human nature: it is what culture makes of it. As a result, we want to think about the human *subject* as someone who is produced in particular historical and cultural circumstances.

In other words, to study humanity you have to look at the variety of techniques—material and symbolic, cultural and social—through which we make ourselves as particular kinds of human beings. Modern technologies shape our societies and our values in ways that go beyond our ancestral cultures, which have in most cases been eroded and are now recast within technical forms of power—state apparatus, market rationalities, bureaucratic systems, and related dominant discourses. Thus while there is a tendency to think of nationalism as somehow purely cultural and primordial in origin, when we deal with modern nation-states, these modes of cultural knowledge are always selectively modified and shaped by modern political rationalities and technologies.

Reflexivity and responsibility in anthropology

The other point I want to emphasize about anthropology is reflexivity. To be reflexive is to be mindful of how you construct knowledge. The *anthropos*, the human, is the object of knowledge. We study humanity, but we are also members of humanity. So we are studying ourselves indirectly. Perhaps you can say in sociology you study society but in anthropology, the object of knowledge is humanity. But humanity is also a technique of knowledge.

So the anthropologist studying the people is very aware that she is also producing knowledge about the people. As a result of the relationship between knowledge and power, as social scientists, academics, or policymakers, we all produce knowledge that directly implicates the subjects that we study. Anyone who wants to talk and write with authority is in a domineering position. So we are extremely aware of how responsible we are when we try to study something: that we are in fact disturbing it. Reflexivity is a sense of dilemma that anthropologists have as modern human beings been studying other modern human beings (Rabinow 1984).

But as a result of a tradition of studying people perceived to be very different from ourselves, anthropologists have tended to defend their way of life against the encroachments of modernity. As humanists, they have tended to be very critical of modern rea-

soning and techniques as objectifying and dominating strategies that have led to the destruction and misrepresentation of premodern cultures. Many anthropologists are very critical of rationality as expressed in the state apparatus, capitalism, and other systems of domination and transformation. They also tend to be critical and skeptical of instrumental knowledge, because they are aware of the tendency to obliterate or to deny other ways of thinking about being human, other forms of morality. Anthropology wants to defend other moral worlds, other ways of being human. It will always be pluralistic in its approach.

However, the simple opposition between what's "traditional" and what's "modern" can no longer be sustained in an age of globalization. **Max Weber** was concerned with economic action and technology in transforming posttraditional society, but today, technical power has evacuated and colonized contexts of traditional knowledge. Neither the anthropologist nor the subject of her study stand outside of modern technical power; they are enmeshed in its many webs and apparatuses. So we must make technical power our problem of investigation (as opposed to being merely critical of it); we must study how various forms of modern power—bureaucratic, political, economic, and scientific—shape society while at the same time produce the uncertainties and social crises that come to define what is human and humanly defensible (Ong 2001).

Modernity and nationalism

It is not possible to talk about Chinese nationalism either as something unique to the history of China or simply in terms of general categories. In this chapter, I present a number of ideas and theories as background for how to think about nationalism in a historical and comparative global context.

One of the fundamental issues in the social sciences today is the rejection of very broad, homogenizing pictures of societies. When I study the "Chinese nation" I see the convergence of different perspectives and experiences. Frequently, we assume that the current official view is the standard one; but the perspective of different generations, classes, and subnational groups may be very different. At any one time, there is a set of contestory claims and definitions linked to different positions of power, which should be identified. When it comes to state definitions of nationalism, it is relevant to link them to processes of reception and legitimization.

Thus it is necessary to be conscious of the categories you apply, to question every single category you use. Nationalism is a modern idea. It is not a homogeneous term that applies to all times and all places. When we talk about nationalisms, we are really talking about the historical period since the 19th century, when transformations in the way society was organized gave people a sense of being modern.

Max Weber: modernity against tradition

There is a variety of theoretical entry points into the discussion. Some of the thinkers I consider central to anthropology are **Max Weber**, **Karl Marx**, **Emile Durkheim**, **Sigmund Freud**, and **Michel Foucault**. Let us take Weber, the least controversial one for scholars in other disciplines.

Duara on deconstruction

To “deconstruct” means a way of epistemological understanding that social reality is constructed by the observer, in one way or the other, and our goal is to take it apart to show how that construction was made, as opposed to the positivistic understanding, which says that reality is given, and our job as scientists is to understand it.

For example, when Karl Deutsch (1961) talked about communications being important for the nation, we have to see that in Deutsch’s historical context, communication was totally controllable by the nation-state; it was in a sense part of the ideology of the nation-state. Deutsch didn’t entertain the possibility that you could have both means and media in communication that might produce different types of sense of community and identity. In this sense, the ideology of the nation, then of the nation-state, and perhaps of just the nation now, is still very much with us, and it is very hard to get beyond it, because we have been formed by it, just as Deutsch had been formed by the nation-state of the early 20th century. Some other generation will tell us how these constraints operated in our case.

We can try and understand what our own constructions are formed by. We used to use the term “immigrant,” but in the United States today we generally avoid that term and use “migrant” instead. “Immigrant” is a part of the ideology of the nation-state, which says that immigrants have to be assimilated and transformed. But we had not been conscious of that until recently. The moment you start calling them migrants, the whole notion becomes transformed and challenged. We are suddenly aware of how the nation-state constructed it.

For Weber, the study of modernity is the study of the problematic confluence of culture and economy. Weber is extremely concerned about questions of rationality. For him, modernity is fundamentally about techniques of rationalization in bureaucracy, in the economy, and in other spheres of life. There is a kind of crisis that arises in the modern period, with society becoming progressively more organized and rationalized. Culture is in crisis, culture is progressively suppressed, driven underground; people no longer know what it means to be human; there is a loss of one’s cultural compass. You don’t know what is happening any more: you lose your answers to the big existentialist questions.

Weber uses the term “disenchantment of culture.” You go to Budapest or Singapore, and it all seems similar. You find the same potato chips. Everything is the same, and culture seems to be receding in the face of modern technical forms and practices.

Benedict Anderson: print capitalism

This crisis of culture on many different levels, for many people and groups in society, has to be part of the discussion on nationalism. Nationalism is a modern version of cultural production. It is an attempt to define culture in relationship to the territory of a nation-state. There is nothing natural about nationalism; it has to be produced. Ben Anderson’s *Imagined Communities* is about nationalism as a form shaped by a collective imagining enabled by modern technologies.

Anderson's Imagined Communities

Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (1991), based on Anderson's study of Southeast Asian politics, is, along with Ernest Gellner's work, perhaps the most-cited recent theory of nationalism. Anderson argues that nationalist consciousness was made possible with the breakdown of three defining characteristics of premodern society: sacred scripts, divine kingship, and the conflation of history with cosmology. Together, these had made for an unselfconscious coherence in society that broke down with the spread of print media in the capitalist market. **Print capitalism** permitted an unprecedented mode of apprehending time that was "empty" and "homogeneous"—expressed in an ability to imagine the simultaneous existence of one's conationals. Travel and the territorialization of the faith relativized this community by defining it as limited, and the decline of the monarchy transferred sovereignty to the community. To be sure, many of the characteristics of nationalism evolve historically through a succession of modular types of nationalist movements. But he believes, nonetheless, that nationalisms have a defining systemic unity embodied in the unique type of self-consciousness of the people imagining themselves as one. (Prasenjit Duara, *Rescuing History from the Nation*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1995, pp. 52–53.)

Duara on Anderson

Many theorists of nationalism say nationalism is a purely modern phenomenon. Some people say that the very idea of identity is a modern idea. That is behind the work of Benedict Anderson as well.

By nationalism he understands how people in different parts of a territory who have never seen each other conceive of themselves as an intimate community, as somehow belonging on the same side of "we vs. the other." Since you have never met each other you have to *imagine* that you have. This imagining yourself as part of a community is what we mean by identity.

Anderson argues that this kind of identity is a modern phenomenon. In premodern societies, say in Manchu China, people saw themselves very much as part of a village or the lineage or the clan. Their sense of community was much more face-to-face. Anderson says the ability to think of a more abstract territory as part of your entity is new.

I might differ with him in that I think that it was possible to think of an imagined community earlier. When the Manchus invaded China, or even earlier, with the Mongol invasion, you had a sense of a Han Chinese identity that distinguished itself from the Mongols or the Manchus. But the difference is that this was not conceived in the same relationship with the territorial nation, with the boundaries, as the later nationalism that is the product of the nation-state system. The new elements are the idea of a completely homogenous political body with no competing sovereignties and *how* that idea of a nation is circulated.

Frank Proschan on Anderson

In the *Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 60, No. 4, pp. 999–1032 (November 2001).

Since its appearance in 1983, Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* has taken on almost talismanic status, ritually invoked for its quasi-magical efficacy in thousands of scholarly discussions of nationalism and ethnicity. (The Social Sciences Citation Index shows 1,424 citations by authors to Anderson's work prior to 1999.) Anderson's book has given focus to a line of argument in

which not only nationalism but ethnicity are seen as reflexes of the Euroamerican colonial enterprise. Anderson proposes what we might call an “appendency theory” of ethnicity, holding that ethnicity is a phenomenon that is secondary to, contingent upon, and necessarily later than the modern nation, and that therefore it could not possibly have existed prior to the colonial conquest and the creation of nation-states. In this view, ethnicity itself is a recent product of modern history—of the colonial or postcolonial era, the age of the modern nation-state and the capitalist world system.

(...) I would argue, following Ronald Atkinson’s discussion of the roots of Ugandan ethnicity, that it is equally wrong “to overlook or underemphasize [the] basic reality [that] however powerful the colonial experience was, it did not occur in a historical vacuum, and it neither erased nor totally overwhelmed all that had gone before” (Ronald Raymond Atkinson, *The Roots of Ethnicity: The Origins of the Acholi of Uganda before 1800*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1994: 17). The denials by those I will call “appendency theorists” of the possibility of precolonial ethnicity are in part a result of their privileging of certain categories of evidence—specifically those embodied in printed texts—and their neglect of disciplines such as ethnology, folklore, oral history, and historical linguistics. (...) I insist that in some (even many) cases, indigenous local peoples had already themselves imagined ethnicity well before the colonial era and well before the domination of **print capitalism**, the world system, or the modern state. The imaginings produced during and after the colonial era must then be seen as adoptions, transformations, modifications, or adaptations of pre-existing local conceptions (...)

Proschan’s argument is based on his study of the origin myths of the Kmhmu, a highland people concentrated in Laos and Vietnam. In these myths, humankind is reborn after a deluge as a sequence of “distinct but interacting ethnic communities, distinguished one from another by skin color, language, territory (...) cultural traditions, economic activities, and access to political authority.” In late versions of the myth recorded by Proschan, this sequence includes not only local peoples but also French and Americans, each endowed by various resources whose origin is explained in the myth.

This was also true for the Chinese empire, which comprised very dispersed and diverse peoples. According to Anderson, it is the emergence of what he calls “print capitalism” that gave rise to the possibility, through the common printed material, for people to imagine themselves as members of the same nation. Print capitalism is Anderson’s reinvention of **Marx’s** theory of the primacy of material forces. Printing, a technology for the dispersal of information, was the necessary technology to unify the territory. This was a new kind of imagining, transcending earlier forms of imagined communities based on religion, civilization, and face-to-face interactions.

Ong on how minorities are framed by majority nationalism

Let us take the example of Dru Gladney’s discussion of the Uyghurs (pp. 275–79). All nationalisms have to accommodate a multiplicity of different groupings, and the political (and usually demographic) majority group tends to impose a hierarchy of different ethno-racial groupings. Officially, China claims to be a multinational country, but all nationalities are part of the Chinese nation. In Taiwan, you have the distinction between “Tai-

wanese" who are descendants of historical Chinese immigration, "mainlanders" who are Mandarin-speaking descendants of immigrants who came to Taiwan with the **Kuomintang** in 1949, some dialectal groups also from the mainland who distinguish themselves from the others, and the Austronesian aboriginal groups.

Both the mainland Chinese and the Taiwanese constructions aim at framing multi-national polities, but the way they are framed is quite different. They involve a different kind of rationality, different kinds of discourses, which converge in different ways. Confucianism is involved in China, it is involved and used in a slightly different way in Taiwan, where, since 1949, it has been held up as part of the state ideology. On the mainland, however, Confucianism has been severely attacked during much of the post-1949 era, but in recent years of market reforms, it has seen a resurgence as the government has sought various ways other than communist ideology to define China's distinctiveness and the political legitimacy of the rulers.

Particular series of classifications, the serialization of knowledge is absolutely critical to the project of nationalism. I grew up in Malaysia, and the whole sense of who was Chinese, Indian, Malay and so on was constructed by census categories derived from British colonial rule. These categories structured your identity in legal and social ways. Anthropologically speaking, it was not always clear-cut what exactly was a Chinese, because people had a mix of ancestry. Southeast Asia has historically been a region known for its blurring of ethnic boundaries. I am someone who could be called a Straits Chinese, a person who is very mixed culturally and in other ways and who could not fit neatly within the census category of Chinese. These categories then came to solidify identities in very specific ways. All citizens have to carry an identity card of a given ethnic category—"Chinese"—a tag that carries with it all kinds of assumptions.

It is thus important to consider what influences shape ethno-racial formation. There may be the effect of a state apparatus that designates different categories of minorities, there may be forms of ethnic self-identification; there may also be the effects of markets and popular culture. For instance, after decades of concealment, some Thai subjects have come forward to reveal that they have Chinese ancestry. The economic boom in Southeast Asia and the rise of ethnic Chinese networks have made it more acceptable to be ethnic Chinese as well as Thai (Blanc 1995).

There are thus time and place coordinates that should modify homogenizing views of the nation and ethnic identity. The point is that the answers you come up with will be very specific to a particular set of perspectives, the actors, and the kinds of events or situations that shape overarching representations.

The geo-body of the nation

Just as nationalism is an imagined process, so is the birth of the nation. The Thai scholar Thongchai Winichakul argues that the modern nation arose from the imagining made possible by modern technologies for defining and hardening the boundaries and territory of the Siamese kingdom. He links the modern period with the idea of a "**geo-body**." In the late 19th century, when the Siamese kingdom was trying to become Thailand, a modern country, it hired European cartographers so that they begin to map out the current configuration of a piece of land that was then given an English name: Thailand. The notion of the nation had to be mapped out physically before it gained a symbolic, as well as a material existence for its people. This is what Thongchai calls a geo-body (Thongchai 1994).

Thus we have the convergence of collective imagination and specific modern technologies—print media, cartography, engineering—that make possible the political and spatial form of the modern nation. A third element is the nationalist discourse, one that often harks back to an originary ancient nation, people, myth, and culture (Smith 1991). Nationalism is thus also imaginary in this sense of a ghostly presence, some ancient wellspring of identity that can always be claimed in the service of enforced solidarity and unity. This imagined primordialism haunts you, especially during times of war, providing you with the deep resources for defending “your motherland.” The new nation is also haunted by what Anderson calls “the spectre of comparisons,” a process whereby one’s nationalism is deeply conditioned by comparisons with those of more “civilized” or more “powerful” others (Anderson 1998). This happens also in other times of great transition. For instance, the current Chinese jingoism—as expressed by leaders and by college students demonstrating against America—has arisen along with the emergence of China as a giant economic power. It is important to note that at other times, talk of nationalism actually has no effect on your everyday life and sentiments.

Karl Polányi: the “double movement” of market and society

The form of the modern nation-state is linked to its role and responses to the spread of capitalism. Karl Polányi is a famous sociologist who, escaping from Nazi Germany, went to New York where he wrote a book entitled *The Great Transformation* (Polányi 1957). The book presented his understanding of what had led to the Great Depression in the 1930s. Polányi argued that the progressive spread of market capitalism had the tendency to break up social relationships. People became atomized; social obligations were no longer honored. Society was stripped from its former forms of social protection. Then, after a tremendous crisis, such as in England in the 19th century, the state had to step in a modernizing society to provide the social protections that were being dissolved by market economy.

Polányi uses the term “double movement” of market and society. All modern states face the fundamental problem that as capitalism progresses, the state has to assume the role of introducing social policies to protect people, otherwise societies would disintegrate. In the originary capitalist economies, these attempts to protect society resulted in the establishment of the welfare state (Polányi 1957, Marshall 1965).

Features of contemporary globalization

In the past two decades, the term “globalization” seems to have become the current framing of social and intellectual problems. Social scientists, scholars in the humanities—and everyone else for that matter—cannot seem to avoid the term, no matter what their specific projects are about. While there have been heated disagreements over what globalization means, there is also a radical sense of urgency across the social sciences that we are confronted with new empirical realities and with a new set of problems that pose new demands on conventional tools and modes of analysis.

One set of approaches across a number of disciplines has treated “globalization” as designating a new unit of analysis or spatial form through which familiar categories

can be studied. For instance, some approaches in sociology have maintained a focus on structures of connectivity and spatial integration. There is a focus on how the logic of global capital is repatterning urban landscapes and how multilateral agencies are shaping an emerging global civil society. One synthetic work in this trend is Manuel Castells' *Information Age Trilogy* (Castells 1996–98).

Breidenbach and Zukrigl about the dynamics of cultural globalization

The myths of cultural globalization*

Two powerful scenarios dominate the public discourse about the cultural consequences of globalization. The one very common scenario represents globalization as cultural homogenization (for example Benjamin Barber's [1992] *McWorld* vs. *Jihad*). In this scenario, globally available goods, media, ideas, and institutions overrun the culturally distinct societies of the world. In a world where people from Vienna to Sidney eat Big Macs, wear Benetton clothes, watch MTV or CNN, talk about human rights and work on their IBM computers, cultural characteristics are endangered. As these commodities and ideas are mostly of Western origin, globalization is perceived as Westernization in disguise. The other scenario is that of cultural fragmentation and intercultural conflict (encapsulated in Huntington's [1993] *Clash of Civilizations* and most recently "confirmed" by the "war on terrorism").

But can we really reduce the processes of cultural globalization (i.e., the process of worldwide interconnections) to these two stereotypes? What about the meaning that local people attach to globally distributed goods and ideas? Why do people drink Coca-Cola and what sense do they make of the soap operas they watch? Do they really trade in their century-old life worlds for the kinds of Madonna and Bill Gates? And how does the homogenization scenario fit with its rival, that of imminent cultural fragmentation?

In order to gain a clearer picture of contemporary global cultural changes, we have to study cultural practices worldwide. Objectively measurable figures concerning death rates, intercultural marriages and marketshares have to be understood in their wider social context. They have to be related to specific worldviews, gender relations and the local meaning of death and wealth.

An ethnographic approach to globalization

But how does one study these intersubjective aspects of life? Many of the writings on the cultural aspects of globalization generalize from experiences gained in the West to other parts of the world. What we need instead are decentralized perspectives, ethnographic **thick descriptions** from local communities all over the world, combined with the predominantly quantitative data obtained through the perspectives of economists, political scientists, and others. What people say and what they actually do or mean are often very different matters.

Good **ethnography** combines detailed empirical research with larger political and philosophical questions. The anthropologist, who goes into "the field" for an extended period of time, attempts to take the perspective of the people he/ she studies and represent his/her findings to a wider audience. The resulting ethnography is a translation, shifting between the perspective of the cultural insider and the cultural outsider (the latter will

* This article is a revised version of Joana Breidenbach and Ina Zukrigl (1999), "The dynamics of cultural globalization," in *Cultural Collaboratory*, <http://www.inst.at/studies/collab/breidenb.htm>

most often coincide with the scientist and his/her audience). Anthropology tries to take a holistic approach to the society in question, i.e., to overcome the artificial separation of analytical categories (such as politics, culture, and economy) common to other disciplines. Single phenomena are studied in their social context and the interpenetration of different aspects of human life, of, for example, legal propositions, worldviews, rituals, and social structure are of central concern.

To gain a better understanding of the cultural aspects of globalization, some findings of the anthropological record will be introduced in the following four hypotheses.

Four hypotheses

1. Different peoples interpret globalized goods, ideas and institutions in highly diverse ways and integrate them in various ways into their own lives.

Societies don't passively give in to foreign and global influences. Instead, anthropological research has stressed the ability of societies to incorporate what might be expected to threaten them. Various strategies of dealing with foreign influences have been identified. The most prominent of these are resistance and appropriation.

Regarding resistance: the state often tries to prohibit foreign influences to enter its territory. The Iranian State doesn't allow its citizens to own satellite dishes; France tries to protect the French language from being Anglicized and invents new French words for fast food and the Internet (*formule rapide* and *entre-reseau*). But imported goods, institutions and ideas also meet resistance from social movements or certain sections of society (ranging from protest against the Miss World beauty contest in Bangalore to the "net-war" of the Zapatistas in Chiapas).

But more often than offering resistance, people incorporate and appropriate foreign influences into their lives. Anthropologist Marshall Sahlins (1988) has written that people often use foreign goods and ideas to become more like themselves. We see in the current anthropological literature a great variety of case studies that demonstrate this process of appropriation.

Let's take McDonald's. McDonald's certainly is a very globalized institution, popular in over 100 countries, serving 30 million customers a day. Sociologist George Ritzer (1996) has even named a homogenization theory after this fast-food giant: the "McDonaldization" of the world. But when you look at ethnographic studies of McDonald's in East Asia or Russia (Watson 1998), the scenario of a global homogenization loses credibility. Yes, some aspects of the rational, fast, and standardized McDonald's system have been accepted in most societies and the chain has effected small but influential changes in dietary patterns. But what comes out of the fieldresearch is that the meaning of McDonald's has been changed enormously by its various customers.

Businessmen in Beijing are able to circumvent a typical Chinese dilemma: banquets in Chinese restaurants are highly competitive. People try to outdo one another by offering the most expensive dishes and beverages. It is typical for a host at a banquet to worry that customers at neighboring tables might be enjoying better dishes, thus causing him or her to lose face. Such competition does not exist at McDonald's, where the menu is limited and the food standardized. For people without a lot of money McDonald's has become the best alternative to host a meal.

Often the success of a global good has unexpected reasons. One reason very many people gave for eating at McDonald's were the clean and spacious toilets, which since have raised the general sanitary standards in East Asian restaurants.

Western fast-food chains have pushed a number of more traditional snack vendors

out of business, but instead of leading to an Americanization of taste, it has initiated a boom of local fast foods. In Beijing, a local chain opened over 1000 outlets that serve Chinese meals like roasted duck and dumplings. And in Moscow the Russkoie Bistro, which sell the traditional pirozhki as a take-away snack, draw more customers than their model and rival McDonald's.

The appropriation of global goods and ideas can be demonstrated in various spheres, from Western concepts like sustainable development and human rights to media technology and media content. The same point applies to all these instances: the intentions of the producers (of goods or ideas) are changed by the people consuming them. This does not mean that people are not affected in very deep ways by imports—they are—but it means we cannot be sure in which way.

2. Globalization leads to a new cultural diversity

As a result of the increasing cultural contact, a number of traditional practices, whole ways of life and worldviews disappear. Special fishing techniques of the Inuit are forgotten, and it is estimated that just 10% of over 6,500 languages spoken today will survive. At the same time globality leads to the emergence of new cultural forms: cultural traditions mix and create new practices and worldviews. Swedish anthropologist Ulf Hannerz (1991) uses the term *creolization*, connoting the creativity and richness of expression of these "cultural bastards." The term refers to cultural expressions that do not have historical roots, but are the result of global interconnections.

More and more individuals stress their multicultural biographies, from writers like Salman Rushdie to Tiger Woods, shooting star of the international golf sport, who calls himself "Cablinasian" to point out his ancestry in black, Indian, and Asian cultures. Writers with a multicultural biography were among the first to express those changes called *creolization*: authors like Hanif Kureishi, Keri Hulme or Emine Sevgi Ösdamer mix languages and express in their writings the diversity and richness of their cultural influences as well as the conflicts that form part of this *creolization* process.

In the shadow of the much-discussed "guest worker" generation, new communities like the Latinos or Afro-Germans have emerged in Germany. There is an estimated number of 400,000 Germans with black and white ancestry, who identify themselves as Afro-Germans. Latin American-born residents marry, work, and mix with Germans. Ecuadorian women share their flats with German homosexual men (not to be imagined in their place of origins) or make Germans fly to Brazil to get introduced to Daime rituals in the Amazon forest. Germans change their lifestyle equally: they get inspired by Eduardo Galiano, learn salsa dancing and study Spanish. The Latino community has no or very little political impact, but it is changing German society in a fundamental and subtle way. Beyond that, locality itself loses its importance. New transnational communities come into being. They are bound together by common interest, profession or social and cultural similarities rather than by origin or geographical closeness. Migrants, exile communities, and refugees set up long-distance communication or economic links and send self-recorded tapes and commodities back and forth.

Both processes, the *creolization* of local societies and the formation of transnational communities, demonstrate the inadequacy of our concept of cultures as bounded and fairly static units. As a consequence of this image we often conceive of cultural change as loss. But "culture is not an attribute to be gained or lost, but (...) a process or struggle by which all peoples of the world attempt to make sense of the world" (Miller 1995b: 269). The image of the world as a mosaic, consisting of clearly defined and separated single stones (the cultures) has to give way to the idea of culture as a flow. The metaphor of

cultural flow allows for acknowledging cultural similarities and differences irrespective of origin and geographical place.

3. The emerging global culture is a reference system that organizes cultural diversity worldwide.

The emerging global culture consists of universal categories and standards by which cultural differences become mutually intelligible and compatible. Societies all over the world are becoming on the one hand more similar to one another, on the other hand more different. Anthropologist Richard Wilk (1995: 117) has called this new reference system "structures of common difference." By this term he refers to a new global hegemony, which is a hegemony of structure, not of contents. Global structures organize diversity. While different cultures continue to be quite distinct and varied, they are becoming different in very uniform ways. Most of the global categories and standards circulating today originate in the West, but spread because people everywhere appropriate them and use them to express themselves and fight for their own ends. In the process, the hegemonic structures themselves are transformed.

Certain ideas, stories and histories (including such diverse things as the institutionalization of human rights, the death of Lady Diana or the demise of the apartheid regime in South Africa) are available to an increasing number of people in most parts of the world. They are distributed mainly through the media and the millions of people on the move, like migrants, refugees, tourists and businessmen. Media and people on the move force people to reflect their own way of life in the mirror of other ways of life. Consequently, very many people develop a "comparative consciousness." This has the potential of creating common ground, a kind of lingua franca for very different people all over the world.

But it is very important to keep in mind that global culture does not exist in a power vacuum. Most of the structures and standards circulating today originate in the West, and the West makes a sustained effort to assure their survival. Yet other countries (such as Southeast Asian politicians and intellectuals) challenge this dominance. The diffusion of many Western ideas and institutions is a fact. But after a successful appropriation, the origin of concepts and ideas is increasingly unimportant. Finally, the dialogue about cultural differences and similarities is forced upon Western societies as they themselves undergo an immense internal process of pluralization and become more and more multicultural. Identity politics and cultural differences are no longer problems somewhere else, but in our own neighborhoods, so cultural differences have to be confronted head-on and dialogue and new forms of conflict resolution are inevitable. It is unlikely that the structures of the global culture will be unchanged after a sustained dialogue.

4. Culture is one of the most prominent global concepts, and it is appropriated in highly diverse ways.

From 1970 to 1980, the number of North American Indians has increased from 700,000 to 1,400,000. This is not the result of a population explosion but reflects the rapidly growing number of North Americans who acknowledge their Indian ancestry and their cultural roots openly. Over the last twenty years a "culture of cultures" (Sahlins 1993) has emerged, representing an important frame of reference for communities worldwide. Indigenous peoples, ethnic minorities, transnational alliances like "black people" but also interest groups like homosexuals or businessmen. They all call a specific "culture" their own, even though originally some indigenous peoples like the Hopi or Kapayo Indians did not have a term in their mother tongue and had to borrow the word from one of the colonial languages.

The culture concept is used by groups to fight for recognition, financial support, or economic and political rights. In order to succeed, many of those "cultural activists" have realized that they have to pronounce their demands at a global level. They seek support from the growing number of transnational organizations that are dedicating their work to the preservation of cultural rights. Nongovernmental organizations such as Amnesty International or the World Council of Indigenous People act as informational mirror sites and present powerful transnational pressure for groups against national governments or companies.

In order to be heard, national minorities or indigenous peoples fighting for acknowledgement and rights have to adapt to the global reference system. This requires that cultural characteristics are presented in a standardized manner. The categories of what we introduced earlier as "structure of common difference" include language, life-style, world-view, or rituals. Only by using those standardized categories Brazilian Indios are able to correspond with Penan in Borneo or Dutch workers take sides with the Penan against the international timber trade. The spectrum of the use of the cultureconcept is broad: Depending on time and context cultural identities are expressed stronger or weaker. In Germany we are Bavarians, in France we are Germans and in South Africa we are simply "from overseas." In minority communities in Britain's largest Asian metropolis, Southall, British-Asian youths refer to their ethnic or religious identity as Hindu, Muslim, or Sikh more openly after incidents of racial attacks. Around Christmas time, Germans develop a deep sense of Germanness by performing "typical German traditions." Being adjusted to the various contexts, culture is manipulated in flexible ways.

Up to a mere decade ago, most minorities felt inferior to the majority population, and most societies took their own way of life as an unquestionable state-of-affairs. Living in a globalized world goes hand in hand with a newly arising consciousness of one's own cultural characteristics. By stressing cultural difference as a fundamental characteristic, a number of ethnic groups and national cultures manipulate the idea of culture to legitimize exclusion and racism.

Most groups, however—from the Dalit in India to Native Hawaiians—instrumentalize the culture concept not for exclusion but to gain recognition and protection of rights. The Ainu, known to be the first group to settle on Hokkaido, fought for a long time to be officially recognized as an ethnic group in Japan, a state that proclaims officially to be a homogeneous nation-state. Using the interest of the growing number of tourists in Japan, the Ainu started to build traditional villages, schools, and information centers, where tourists could experience "traditional culture." By deciding which cultural aspects to keep alive and which ones to drop, the Ainu identity is reconstructed in a selective way that is far from being authentic in a strict historical sense. To forge their identity, Maori, Maya, and other indigenous groups have used the same strategy and put themselves on the market.

In South Mexico's Chiapas region the Mam-speaking Indians (Castillo and Nigh 1995) have created a market niche by reinvention of the principles of their traditional social organization and agricultural methods. In the past, the Mam never defined themselves as a single ethnic group. They were spread over two countries, and on the Mexican side, they were fairly acculturated and had only few Mam speakers left. Though having small plots (*ejidos*) for subsistence farming, nearly all Mam worked as farm hands on large commercial farms. At the beginning of the 1980s, the NAFTA agreement was signed and the Mexican government started to support a change towards an export-driven agricultural production. Soon many farms were hit by the negative consequences of the "crops for greater value" policy: the overall profit decreased while the amount of imported

food had to be increased, health problems arose that were seen as a result of the pesticides and chemical fertilizers, food quality worsened, and due to growing debts, there was a sharp rise of poverty in rural communities.

Facing this development, the Mam decided to return to traditional methods of farming. Exploring the past, they “discovered” their “old ways” of organic farming (farming without pesticides and living in harmony with their environment). Values such as reciprocity and collective action were found to be close to the principles of 19th-century-based British cooperatives. A reinvention of tradition combined with a consciously defined identity as “the last descendants of the Mayan people” provides a lucrative niche in the global market. Searching for markets, the cooperative ISMAM turned to Native American businesspeople for advice on marketing, production, and the formulation of a corporate image. The annual profit of \$7 million secures the communities a sound economic base. Further, eighty Mam communities are involved in a joint-venture agreement with North American Indian investors to build an eco-tourism facility on the Chiapas coast.

Conclusion: the dialectics of cultural globalization

Let us summarize some of the dynamics of cultural globalization as they emerge from the anthropological record. Cultural globalization is a highly dialectic process, in which globalization and localization, homogenization and fragmentation, centralization and decentralization, conflict and creolization are not opposites, but sides of the same coin. Cultural change is not only a story of loss and destruction, but also of gain and creativity: as a result of increasing interconnection, old forms of diversity do vanish, but at the same time a new cultural diversity comes into existence.

Certain concepts and structures of the modern world are being diffused globally. Every country has its national anthem, bureaucracy, and school system. People everywhere in Bolivia, Switzerland or China discuss the relevance of human rights. At the same time, cultural peculiarities take on harsher edges, as their different practices and worldviews are compared to and compete with one another. It's in light of this process that identity politics (as described in Proposition 4 above) gain in importance.

Different worldviews and lifestyles come into touch with one another and can lead to an increase in stereotypes and conflicts. At the same time these different lifestyles and orientations mix, leading to a creolization of ideas, goods, and institutions. German school authorities have to deal with Turkish clothing regimes and gender relations and solve resulting intercultural conflicts. The Popmüzik of young German-born Turks (which combines elements from Western and Arabic musical traditions) is highly popular with youngsters in Berlin and Istanbul alike. Globalization leads to new transnational public spheres, to new communities, which often transcend national and regional boundaries (global Hinduism, Latino communities, youth cultures, the professional cultures of businessmen or artists—to name just a few). At the same time, national communities are increasingly pluralized and fragmented, as fewer people in a neighborhood share the same cultural inventory, fight for the same values, and speak the same language.

Globalization and localization are—from this perspective—one process. The local is increasingly a spin-off and part of the global. Cultural peculiarities, e.g. the national cultures of Singapore and Germany, Trinidadian or Swedish economic practice, Italian fashion and Californian cuisine have been and are what they are because of their participation in a global world system, and cannot be understood outside this global context. If globalization is seen from an individual point of view, it again appears as a double-edged sword: the possibility to compare one's own life with many other possible lives can cast individual misery in an even sharper light, lead to discontentment and insecurity, and make peo-

ple vulnerable to the gruesome practices of urban warfare and ethnic cleansing. On the other hand, the availability of many different worldviews and lifestyles can lead to a fruitful dialogue and be experienced as an enormous chance for self-realization and the enrichment of society.

By many anthropologists, globalization has been studied as flows of populations, cultures, money, and the media, and their effects on new spatial forms including the production of postnational cultural orders. The problem seems to be one of studying cultural difference when “cultures” are no longer clearly defined. Culture is despatialized; it is no longer confined to its national territory but located in transnational spaces (Gupta and Ferguson 1992). This has given rise to new transnational cultural spaces that Appadurai has called “ethnoscapes” and “mediscapes” (from “media”) (Appadurai 1996). There is also the suggestion that with global flows and the ruptures of displacement, cultures are reinscribed through activities that protest or resist global and state domination (Comaroff 2000).

Yet other anthropologists have studied social disruptions but not through these overarching structures, or investigated social change simply within the structural space, or the cultural frame. The goal is to consider globalization not merely a shift in the unit of analysis, nor the intensification of flows of capital, people, rational forms, practices or values. The point is to go beyond the “new container” models of studying globalization, to an explicit articulation of emerging problem-spaces within which we confront questions about structural changes, and how they shape new social forms, and even new forms of life, health, and well-being of humanity.

Exploding the frame of analysis

One of the social effects of global forces is a reconfiguration of the global landscape, so that taken-for-granted frames of analysis—for example China—have obviously exploded. You have to be familiar with the boundaries of China, our conventional frame of analysis, but it is obvious that in this posttraditional moment, no culture or place is shielded from the varied effects of globalizing forces. You never could generalize all across China easily, but even less so today because there are all these networks, complex kinds of configurations, spatial and temporal effects that intensify flows. There are institutional and organizational changes, the emergence of multilateral agencies, United Nations, human rights regimes. They control communications and regulations. There is the emergence of international regulatory agencies. In 2001, China joined the World Trade Organization (WTO), and for the benefits of membership, the country had to bow down to its regulations. And of course there are the transforming effects of capitalism, consumer society, electronic networks, and other modern technical systems that are radically changing China as a polity, economy, society and culture.

There is a sense of reflexivity as Chinese subjects deal with new social connections, practices, knowledge, and information (for an analytical framework combined with ethnographic studies of Chinese in different sites around the world see Ong and

Nonini 1997). At the same time, Western countries dealing with China have to take into consideration that it is a very different place. There is the sense among American corporations in China that you have to be more open to difference and to take into consideration the concerns of other societies even though you may not share their values. We have myriad instances of how different ways of doing things are converging in a variety of sites as a result of globalizing encounters.

Modernization in the West

In Europe and America, modernization brought convergence and conflict between democracy and capitalism. The spread of capitalism made it very hard to spread democracy, because the divisions between the rich and the poor increased. The welfare state was supposed to compensate for those differences.

In the United States, the continual influx of immigrants since its founding finally led to the public recognition of the nation as multicultural in character. Successive US administrations have tried to formulate what were distinctive American attributes: a spirit of the frontier, individual rights, freedom, self-reliance, income-earning, and the right to vote (Shklar 1991). At the same time, dominant American discourses also supposed that individuals belong to one cultural “community” or another. They were supposed to be Polish-Americans, Jewish-Americans, African-Americans, and so on.

In the past two decades, there has been a breakdown in the assumption that immigrants will have to be assimilated into dominant white cultural majority. Following the example of the black civil rights movement, many minority and immigrant groups are resisting imposed ethno-racial categories and the obligation to give up their cultural beliefs, practices, and languages.

How are ethno-racial groups classified in relation to the dominant ethno-racial group in various countries? Can such classificatory systems be sustained in contexts of extensive multilateral relations networks?

Multiculturalism, at least in rhetoric but usually more, has become the norm in many institutions and places. In addition, the “politics of recognition” have led to claims of “cultural citizenship”: the right to be full citizens and culturally different at the same time (Taylor 1994, Ong 1999a).

When we use the term **postmodernism** in culture, we allow a fragmentary nature

of understanding what culture is. Postmodernism is a sense of profound dislocation of one’s culture and tends to be related to a sense of alienation. In many cases in North America, culture is postmodern, but it is also nostalgic. There is a fascination with the foreign. This kind of attention reinvents one’s identity vis-à-vis the imagined Other. Communitarianism can be a reaction to the destructive effects of modernity, an expression of hatred of (post)modern secularist society, a kind of turning inwards, to the homeland: very romantic, very fanatical, in fact, the root of fascism in Europe.

Modernization outside the West

Outside the West, modernization brought conflict between colonial rule and capitalism on the one hand, and the dominated communities on the other. Cultural difference has played a greater role in the project of modernity because modern technical power—the model of the nation-state, the market economy, the modern army, the modern sciences—came with Western colonial domination and imperialism. How to react to Western domination? You emphasize your culture and your community against Western forms of social interactions, means of governance, and systems of knowledge, and yet need to master and adopt those. Even in noncolonized countries like Japan, the reinvention of the political system involved going to Europe to study technology and use it to defend Japanese culture, sovereignty, and community against Western imperialist powers in the Pacific Ocean. In colonized countries such as India, but even in some noncolonized countries such as Thailand and Japan, the cultural community was always at the very forefront for the emerging elites undertaking the project of modernity (Chatterjee 1993, see chapters on Japan and India in Moore 1966).

For Asian societies, then—to put it rather simply and generalize too much—culture has always been a nation-state project that cannot be separated from the project of modernizing the country. That is why it is important to separate state and nation as two different categories, and figure out how they are conjoined. They are conjoined in many late-developing countries, because cultural community is central to the definition of society. When you undertake capitalist development, you are afraid that capitalism, which is a Western form, will destroy your culture. So to defend the culture is a national project, and the national elite defines what “culture” is. For the late developing countries, then, the revolution is from above: it is the government that’s creating the revolution, unlike in the West, where the revolution has come from below. With the revolution from above, the state plays a major role in capitalist development *and* in defining national culture (Moore 1966).

State projects and control of national culture

In an era of globalization, do governments continue to define belonging to a single cultural nation? Who controls the cultural heritage? Who has the right to define tradition?

There are always different intentions to define tradition. The great **Taiping rebellion** in China was an attempt to redefine Chinese tradition in terms of modernity, pluralism, global flows, etc. So it is important when understanding nationalism to know that it emerged from multiple points

and not just to take its current political version. It is important to understand that nationalism is extremely unstable, that its statements are constantly contested, that it is multiple and destabilizing. The multiplicity of ideas about nationalism has to be introduced into any discussion of it: whose idea is this, when is it opposed, who contests it, why is it taken up by the people, etc.

Nationalism began to be a force when Asian countries were emerging from under Western domination. It was not just print capitalism but also the fight to reclaim the homeland that gave it an incredible moral force.

Remoralizing the Asian nation

Duara on deconstruction
see p. 4

It is important to denaturalize the categories of the nation and the country; that is, not to take them as a given. When someone says "I am Chinese," it is not an unproblematic statement.

When a book about China is only about China, it is suspect. The idea of a culture that is seamless, holistic, and unchangeable: that is nonsense. It is a kind of popularization, a kind of simple anthropology for the lay public. One must be aware of culture as something that has been produced, and one must ask who produces it and in what context. One must look at national strategies and at actual practices in everyday life in order to figure out what these things mean.

"Culture" as an analytical category must be problematized. There is nothing static about culture, there is nothing systematic about it. Culture is open-ended; you have to reproduce, recreate it. In many contexts, it is in fact more accurate to speak about "values" rather than "culture." This way, we disrupt hegemonic and very dangerous discourses about unchanging cultures and the inevitable "clash of civilizations" (Huntington 1997).

Clifford on who speaks for "a culture"

in James Clifford, "Traveling Cultures," in *Routes*. Cambridge, Mass., and London: Harvard University Press, 1997; p.19.

I am always running up against a problematic figure, the "informant." A great many of these interlocutors, complex individuals routinely made to speak for "cultural" knowledge, turn out to have their own "ethnographic" proclivities ... Twentieth-century **ethnography** ... has become increasingly wary of certain localizing strategies in the construction and representation of "cultures." ... Every focus excludes; there is no politically innocent methodology for intercultural interpretation. Some strategy of localization is inevitable if significantly different ways of life are to be represented. But "local" in whose terms? How is significant difference politically articulated, and challenged? Who determines where (and when) a community draws its lines, names its insiders and outsiders?

Asian nationalisms: tradition in modernity

Duara on authenticity

Much of the sense of moral authority is created in the idea of an *authentic*, of a *true* national community. Authenticity has become a very important word in trying to understand the power of ideologies like nationalism. And this becomes possible once you create the idea of deep histories. If you look at most nationalisms, they are very new phenomena. And the communities involved are themselves quite new, because they include some

people and they exclude other people. These nationalisms, however, are now written as very deep histories: that somehow these nations have always been united, have had one single source, one origin, and the people have evolved collectively into the modern nation. This is what we call *essentialization*: to make something part of the essence of a people. It is deep history, the assertion that a people have always been unified, that produces moral authority. It produces the right for you to say that you should act in a certain way for the collective unity (Hobsbawm and Ranger, 1992).

Authenticity as the source of moral authority

What we call "regime of authenticity" is really a political force. Whoever gets to control what is the authentic, true nation can get people do for them what they want. So it is very important who gets to be the *custodian*, the keeper of this authenticity. And very often in the society there are different groups who compete. The most recent example of custodians of authenticity may be the Taliban in Afghanistan. The Taliban believe that modernization did not capture the idea of Afghan Islamic authenticity. But you can see it in America, too. In America, where you have the militia movements who believe that true American values mean getting out of the United Nations and attacking the government because the government has lost the essence of what America is. They are, right now, not very powerful, but one can imagine circumstances when they could become more powerful.

When we are dealing with nationalism we are dealing with strategies to define our morality, who we are as a society. In late-developing countries like Japan, China, Singapore, Korea, nationalism is part of the state project of development. These two strategies often go hand in hand.

Weber argues that modernity refers to the spread of rational techniques of organizing into every area of life: the running of government, the economy, education. The rationalization of every area of life produces a kind of crisis. So in the period of modernity, tradition becomes something that can only be invented, because we have already become alienated from it. Modernity is a form of alienation from what used to be extremely natural. We all live now in a modern period, and we are all self-conscious about culture. Very self-consciously we try to patch together a cultural identity.

Because the project of development is a project of modernization and it has to be justified, it has to be connected somehow to the moral character of the nation. It has to be imbued with a sense of tradition in a posttraditional society. It is an attempt to remoralize the nation.

Culture has always been important as a strategy of state control. Now the state needs to invent and reinvent tradition. Asian states are superb at this. They ransack the entire cultural heritage, all the religious forms in Asia, to find the elements they take up to reinvent their culture (see Chapter 2 and Chapter 7 in Ong 1999b).

In America today we are worried about a crisis around us. So we talk about family values, religious values, Christian values, and so on. People who talk about them mean that those values are somehow particular to American culture. But they do not frame everything in those terms. In Asian nations, the tendency is to frame everything in terms of the culture. The culture is the overall framing thing. There is this total, constant enchantment with culture.

Mahathir bin Mohamad, the former Prime Minister of Malaysia, would always say the same thing about our national culture.* The American way is not our way, we are much more communalistic, we care more, we are nicer, we are not vulture capitalists, we take care of women, etc. In Asia the tendency is, then, for politicians to constantly talk about culture. Every single speech is about their culture.

It was startling to me to talk to people in China who did not know Chinese history—because they were not taught it when they were growing up—but suddenly confessed to be Confucianist. I do not know what they meant by being Confucianist, but it was like a genetic blueprint. We are Chinese, so we are Confucian.

This biological notion of being Confucian Chinese also informs the approach to the welcome of overseas Chinese—or any person of ethnic Chinese ancestry. One of the reasons why overseas Chinese have been very attractive to mainland China obviously is that they brought investment. Some said it was the overseas Chinese who launched the capitalist development of China. There is a perception that overseas Chinese were absolutely essential again after **Tiananmen**, when Western investors withdrew their capital, and only Japan, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Southeast Asia continued to invest in China. Hong Kong and Taiwan together (“Greater China”) have a larger investment in China than any other country.

Ong on “Greater China”

The trope of “Greater China” [*Da Zhonghua*] (was) coined by Japanese economists to describe the increasing economic integration between China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan produced by globalization. The combined foreign-currency reserves of Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Singapore, together with those of China, it is claimed, would place the Chinese bloc far ahead of Japan as Asia’s first-rank economic giant. Some writers have gone so far as to claim that the overseas-Chinese community, not the nation-state, is “the mother of China’s (economic) revolution” (Cheng Xiyu, *Research Note on the “Chinese Economic Zone,”* ISSCO Bulletin 2, no. 2, 1994: pp. 3–4.).

Chinese state interests, however, are vigorously expressed in public forums and in the press. Patriotic scholars are quick to reject Greater China as a banker’s fantasy, an illusion of outsiders greedy to cash in on China’s booming economy. They fear that any ideological recognition of a wider “Chinese” capitalist zone will undermine China as a territorially based political entity (Ong 1999b: p. 60).

The welcome extended to these Chinese from other parts of Asia was probably because of this sense that they came with capital and helped to develop the country. At the same time, they were perceived to have preserved a Confucian traditional culture that had been lost in the mainland during the Maoist years. So people liked it: “Hey, I also have Confucian culture!” It is very funny, this labeling of the economic practices of overseas Chinese as Confucian.

* See e.g. www.apmforum.com/news/apmn21.html

The moral economy of Asian nations

Nationalism in many Asian countries is a form of regulation. The modern state is fundamentally concerned about managing its population so that the population is productive. Biopolitical considerations are absolutely critical in shaping our sense of moral identity. In America, if you are a welfare recipient, you are a bad subject, because as an American, you are not supposed to make claims on the state. You are not productive, you are lazy. As a good American, you should not be a welfare mother, you should try to be an entrepreneur instead. The entrepreneur is the moral subject in America.

I talk about biopolitics in two senses. One is the **Foucauldian** sense of an apparatus of modern state power being fundamentally concerned about managing populations to be healthy and productive. In the recent decade, North America and Australia have suddenly come to welcome Chinese people because they are viewed as agents who accumulate capital. They have come to represent the new global entrepreneur subject, the kind of person who is productive and self-reliant and wealth-making. In some ways, ethnic Chinese capitalists, managers and high-tech professionals are seen to be the new Americans, ideal citizens who contribute to the wealth of the nation. And this kind of biopolitical association is certainly kept up by many Chinese from Hong Kong and other places. You go to a Chinese restaurant, sit there, listen to the conversation, and it is about money and real estate. It is nonstop. The telephone is buzzing, and they are talking about real estate. It is this profound association with money making. That is the goal of life, that is who they are.

As an anthropologist, I aim to investigate specific strategies and practices of institutions and individuals, and in this case I use the Foucauldian approach. **Foucault** sees power not as possession but as operation, a set of techniques. It shapes your sense of who you are and how you relate to yourself and your family.

James Scott on the moral economy

The other sense in which I think of biopolitics is related to James Scott's idea of the **moral economy**. Scott works on Southeast Asia and is perhaps best known for his book *The Moral Economy of the Peasant* (1976). "Moral economy" refers to a social system in which an unequal exchange governs social relationships, obligations, and the distribution of resources, in order to secure survival for all. The economy is an exchange of resources, but it is moralized, it is not based on capitalist principles of profit making.

Capitalism is a system that doesn't justify itself in moral terms. Marx talked about free capital, free market, free labor market, contractual relationships with no moral obligation. You go to the market and sell your work, and that is the end of the relationship. You don't care whether your worker is starving. Therefore moral economy is a model that is often applied to premodern societies. Yet it can also be applied to segments of modern societies. As **Polányi** argues, in a modern democracy the state has to take on the job of moralizing this problem.

Moral issues are no longer taken up by larger institutions. Instead, they are taken up by human rights discourses which do not justify them in narrow, old-fashioned moral terms, but in the terms of common humanity. Thus the discourse of human rights, like the newer narratives of bioethics, is a late modern kind of language for shaping

ethical regimes that will determine what is and what is not human behavior in a universalizing manner.

In advanced capitalist societies like North America it is the family where the morality is. The woman is the one who sustains the moral economy. People will give things to relatives who need help. Although the validity of the model is much more limited, parts of working class populations in particular are compelled to continue the moral economy. I started with Weber's idea of the rationalization of the economy and suppression of local cultures; but what we have now is the progressive rationalization of morality. The ethics of universal human normativity and self-management are spread through global humanitarian interventions.

Asian peasants illustrate the idea of a moral economy. The patron, the landlord, has a special relationship with the peasants on his land, the tenants. The relationship is structured according to the moral understanding that the patron will help the peasants when they have trouble. "Landlord, you've got to take my child to the clinic; you've got to help because my husband has just died and you've got to take care of my family." When they do not have trouble, the peasants are happy to live under conditions of exploitation and inequality.

So there is an understanding of unequal mutuality. It is an insurance policy: the patron is the welfare net, you can fall back on him, but in the meantime he exploits you. It is a very delicate balance of power, because once the patron refuses to honor his obligations as a patron, you can overthrow him. This is the traditional Chinese idea of the "mandate of Heaven." The imperial house carries Heaven's mandate to rule, but only as long as it rules righteously and humanely. If the populace manages to overthrow it, that simply means that the mandate of Heaven had been withdrawn from it for its transgressions against the Way of Heaven.

The moral economy of Asian values: The Singapore example

I argue, with James Scott, that many Asian countries moralize their biopolitical relationships with the population in terms of the relationship of the paternalistic state to the will of the people. In Southeast Asia, there is constant talk about Asian culture and Asian values, and it is very hard to understand why that happens apart from the need to legitimize the government's domination.

But this legitimacy has to have something behind it that nearly works. That is the understanding that the people's will places them in an implicit social contract with the state. Although these states have elected governments and are modern forms of democracy, they need to continue to have these relationships of exchange with the population. Hence this implicit agreement between the political elite and the population that the government will deliver.

Singapore is a good illustration. The Singapore government proudly calls it a "home-owning democracy," and they are right, because in Singapore there is a vast middle class, and everyone has a home. According to the government, only 45 individuals are homeless. So the promise of Singapore's government is: you will all have the possibility of owning homes and have a wonderful, clean environment; you will have jobs; you will have savings; but you've got to vote for us and be loyal. And this kind of

exchange explains why Singapore people seem to put up with a so-called dictatorial, totalitarian society. Because they are getting what they want.

Rhetorically, this moral economy with a high level of social control, suppression of dissidence, and a high concentration of power in the government's hands is justified in terms of spiritual difference with the West. The government says that Singaporeans are spiritually different from Americans, who are individualistic and consumer-oriented and don't care about their families.

It is very common for politicians in Singapore to make such comparisons in their speeches. In one of his speeches, Lee Kuan Yew, the Singapore leader, talks about the difference between countries with soft values and hard values*.

The Chinese have hard values, because they are hard working and organized and good at making money. The Malays in Malaysia and Singapore and the Filipinos are people who come from societies with soft values: they just do not try hard enough, they just do not invest themselves in this kind of discipline. So the whole talk of spiritual difference is a tool of moral discipline by the state.

In Asia, it is even more important to moralize capitalism. In the West, where people have been used to capitalist relations for so long, the need to moralize them in a broader sense is not so pressing. In America you do not owe anybody anything. If I am rich, I deserve it, if you are poor, it is your fault. But in Asia, the government still needs to moralize inequality. Don't you need to take care of your relatives? Don't you need to take care of poor people? So the moral economy has to be discussed in relationship to capitalism. Capitalism is breaking down the family, demoralizing the society, and moral questions come back in different ways.

Asian renaissance and capitalist development

But there are also very explicit, very clear material dimensions to the remoralizing project. In recent years, from the eighties to the nineties, there was an economic boom in Southeast Asia producing the highest growth of the world. In the period of economic boom, the talk about Asian values reached its peak. Before that, when the countries were beginning to develop, they talked about looking East. In Malaysia, when we started to have export-driven industrialization, the government talked about looking to Japan. It was called the "Look East" policy. You look to Japan to learn about how they can bring about the kind and gentle form of capitalism in the way Japanese are supposed to treat their workers. That was the beginning of a kind of reorientation in relation to other Asian countries. And when the boom really took off, there were Singaporean and Malaysian government leaders who were best in the English language but who began to talk about Asian renaissance, a kind of resurgence of cultural values all over Asia. They began to talk about the commonality between Hinduism and Confucianism. There were institutions set up to talk about civilizations and Confucian culture in Southeast Asia.

And then, the currency crisis in 1998 produced a crisis in terms of cultural narra-

* See Lee Kuan Yew, "Culture as Destiny" at www.foreignaffairs.org/19940301faessay5100/fareed-zakaria/a_conversation_with_lee_kuan_yew.html

tion as well. So the talk is no longer about Asian values, it's more focused. So that the Prime Minister of Thailand, who is an ethnic Chinese, ran on the ticket of a party called "Thai Love Thai" (Thai Rak Thai). There is now a return of old indigenous, local Asian culture. Because the countries now are falling back on themselves, they no longer are so comfortable depending on international capital flows as the route to economic development and no longer try to globalize the national identity. They emphasize what is specific about Malaysia or Thailand. Singapore has closed down its Confucian institute.

So you see that all these narratives are related to the very particular, shifting conditions of the state as it aims to secure economic development within the global context. These are what **Foucault** calls the **regimes of truth**: the normalizing and regulating practices that make truth claims. These claims regulate the society and are also a way to handle foreign relations. So that when former Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir claimed that George Soros was the cause of all the problems in Southeast Asia because Soros was a Jew who was playing with money: Mahathir then was not simply engaging in anti-Semitic scapegoating, he was at the same time being consistent with the narrative of Asian cultural particularity.

The moral economy approach explains the very strong adherence to certain kinds of discourses about culture by the leaders. It always puzzles me why people agree with what the government says about culture. To me, culture is a very personal thing. When I listen to what the priests or politicians tell us about our culture, it is obvious that they only address certain social segments.

Globalization and the problem for the authoritarian state

How do new global narratives of environmentalism, risks, human rights or bioethics undermine discourses of nationalism? Can they make moral regulation of citizenship multilateral or present alternative ways of being human? What is the role of nation-states in negotiating with universalizing ethics?

What is the context of reenchantment with culture in Asia? Is Asia more receptive to such reenchantment than the West? If so, why?

With globalization, this kind of moral economy narrative is becoming less effective because of the expansion of a public sphere, of multiple views, some of which challenge the moral authority of the state. The public discourses and modern media have introduced a higher degree of modern skepticism.

With the opening of China to foreign investment, expansion of communications, trade, information, technology, a sense of modern skepticism is arising very rapidly among the emerging middle class. The work of moralizing the nation has become much more difficult. So a radical contingency and indeterminacy is now being introduced to any concept of nationalism in Asia as well, not just in America. The

authoritarianism of Asian governments is now very problematic, because power cannot once and for all be totally justified. It has to be constantly reiterated and ascertained.

Limits of the moral economy approach

The moral economy is an ideal type. It does not explain everything. There are people in China who are genuinely upset; they feel there is a spiritual hollowness in China, there is no meaning, so they try to look for it in another way. You see this in Malaysia as well, in the form of Islamic revivalism. When the government faced a challenge in the name of Islam, it became more Islamic as a way to control that force. But sometimes you cannot control these forces because people no longer believe the government.

Duara on authenticity see p. 18

Another point of caution is that it is very dangerous to talk about the state. There is no such thing as *the* state. It is an abstraction. It is only meaningful to talk

about specific state actors, their strategies and the effects of their actions.

Alternative modernities

Another question has been posed by many people since Weber: whether the modernity that emerges in Asian countries will be the same as the modernity that arose from the West. And obviously it won't. Every country tries to selectively take parts of Western forms, and even the same form becomes reconstituted and reembedded in the home culture. You may see the same skyscrapers and subway stations, but there will be a different texture to them, different values attached to them.

When anthropologists used the term "alternative modernity," there was a shock, because in the social sciences for the longest time the assumption had been that there is one modernity, and that is the Western version of modernity, the system of rational practices that originated in the West and has proliferated around the world.

One attempt to come up with the idea of alternative modernity has been Mayfair Yang's. Yang, an anthropologist, self-consciously sets up modern China as the product of conjoining modernist discourses.

Discussion: Is there an "alternative" Chinese modernity?

A discussion between Aihwa Ong, Frank Dikötter, Pál Nyíri and students Susan Lu Feng and Qiao Mu

Dikötter: Can we say there is the West and it has a modernity? We have to define what that modernity is. Does modernity mean the same thing to everybody in the West? Probably not. We don't know. When I hear the terms "Western society," "Western values," "Western modernity," I find them very suspicious.

Ong: I think it is useful to suggest that there are different kinds of modernities. Modernity does not refer to specific symbols like McDonald's. It is a complex, an assemblage of different kinds of understanding and articulation. It is an articulation of what is modern, a sort of discourse.

When I say “alternative modernity,” I am talking about the way culture gives meaning to skyscrapers and subway stations. If you go to Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia, you see these incredible skyscrapers, which I consider totally absurd. This is a Western form of architecture that proclaims having arrived and Malaysia belatedly wants to be the country with the world’s highest skyscraper, but it strives to be aesthetically different. It comes to represent the country, to symbolize a kind of alternative modernity into which Malaysia has arrived: even though it is a developing country, it has bolted, symbolically speaking, to that level. So in that sense it is alternative; it is appropriated and represented in a different way. It is a very self-conscious and explicit articulation; obviously, this is proliferated around the world, but here it is the state project.

You can study the globalization of Western symbols of modernity and their local appropriation, as James Watson (1998) has done with McDonald’s in *Golden Arches East*. I went to Shanghai to interview the IBM chief. He says, “In fifty years I don’t want Chinese to think IBM is American. I want them to think IBM is Chinese.” You can also look at alternative modernities from the angle of different forms of capitalism. But my focus here is on the state project of modernity, the state as the actor. So I brought alternative modernity in the context of the discussion of Asian nationalism because I want to show you that it is a state project and culturally absolutely central to this articulation of alternative modernity.

Nyiri: In the case of Russia I find that the way Russia sees modernity is actually very untrivial. Russia could see modernity in the same way as China does, as something distinct, but I don’t think this is the case. (Obviously, different people in Russia and China see modernity in different ways, but I am talking about dominant discourses now.)

When the Chinese talk about “modern”—and they talk about *fazhan*, development, and *xiandai*, modern all the time—what they mean is wide streets and tall buildings. Some types of behavior are modern. And by comparison, in the West there is less that is modern. I think surely that is where they see spaces differently, because if you arrive in a city in Europe, you will not perceive 19th century architecture as a lack of modernity, as backward.

Ong: Students from China take on some kinds of economistic measures that to me are extremely Western and capitalistic and yet they claim to see the world from a Chinese perspective. That is why I started out talking about the **moral economy**, where traditionally economic exchange relationships were moralized and understood as having intrinsic moral limits and moral meaning. In transition from that to contemporary societies where the economy is paramount, Asians are more eager to be capitalistic than Westerners. They are desperate to catch up. So the Chinese have a simple idea of what is modern: skyscrapers and subways. And that kind of definition has a real effect because people understand this is what modernity is all about. But I want to stress that I am talking about state projects, not about everyday experience or the everyday perspective of what is modern.

Susan Lu Feng: I classify modernity into two levels: macro- and micromodernity. From the level of macromodernity I agree with the opinion that there is Western modernity and alternative modernity. McDonald’s is Western, and in China there is a local McDonald’s, so it will be influenced by Western society. But from the perspective of micromodernity, the flavor of the chicken has already been changed. A Chinese will know that McDonald’s is very good for us, skyline is very good for us, political system is good for us, but China will

not accept Japanese or Western models. China will use some factors that are suitable for Chinese. If it is not suitable for China, it will get rid of that kind of factors. Later, a new, Chinese modernity will be formed.

Nyiri: When you say there will be a Chinese modernity, do you mean that it is something that people will perceive as such, or do you mean that Chinese modernity really has different characteristics measured by different standards?

Ong: It is not an issue of macro–micro, it is an issue of strategies and practice. McDonald's has a corporate strategy that includes having noodles. But you want to understand the everyday practice of Chinese consumers who want McDonald's in complex ways that are very Chinese. So you are interested in everyday practices of having a modern Chinese subjectivity that includes consuming McDonald's in China in a particular fashion. That's why when I talk about methods, I say you have to focus on practice because it is the practice that produces culture.

So modern Chinese popular culture now includes McDonald's, too, which is part of Chinese cuisine now, although it has been transformed.

Nyiri: I think what you are saying is no matter how global McDonald's or modernity is, still the way people practice it will be local. I think nobody would argue with that. But there is a somewhat different question: do you measure modernity in universal ways? If some people come up and say, "Well, the chicken actually tastes different, therefore our Chinese modernity is different," I think in some way this is not true, because people in China will not say "this taste of the chicken, this is modern."

There was a book by Michael Adas (1989), *Machines as the Measure of Men*. It was part of the debate about whether so-called non-Western civilizations have alternatives to the so-called Western modernities in terms of the standards of modernity. Adas was one of the early people who pointed to a Western imperialistic project of imposing the West's own technologically oriented measures of modernity on other countries. But there are alternative systems of knowledge that have other measures. Adas does not say what those are. My problem with that book is that if you look at what the Asian governments call modernity, you will discover that it is exactly the same as the British government did during the time of Rudyard Kipling—it is again the machines.

I am a Western colonialist, I come to a city: "What are these wooden shacks and water buffalos—this is backward. No, we have to build roads and have cars. That is modern." If a Chinese official goes into a village, what will he say?

Qiao Mu: Maybe we have to go back to the late **Qing** Dynasty. Something like "Chinese learning as base, Western learning for use."

Nyiri: But the question is where is the base. What are the **Four Modernizations** that are the mantra of Chinese reform? The modernization of agriculture, the modernization of industry, the national defense...

Ong: The difference is between the analytical use of the term alternative modernity—which is the way I have been trying to use it—and the native perception. When we talk about modernity, we talk about the way the state claims to be in the condition of being modern. Modernization is the actual process, the material process in modernizing agriculture, industry, what have you.

The Chinese government has said that they haven't modernized yet sufficiently in the political realm, but they are going to. There is explicit articulation by the Chinese everywhere of how they are modern and how they are different. The difference is that they are not interested in the kind of freewheeling American notion of political rights because they want to have some stability and control in their society.

Nyiri: Let's go back for a second to the **Four Modernizations**. I.e., now these four things are not modern, so we want to make them modern. But you can't say this is "Chinese," because it doesn't say what it is to be modern. Lenin said, "Communism equals Soviet power plus the electrification of the entire country." If Zhou Enlai had said something like, modern agriculture equals the electrification of all water buffalos—yes, this is Chinese; but if modern agriculture simply means that you have big fields with modern machinery, chemical fertilizers and you make a lot of money with it—then this is not "Chinese."

Ong: That's why I say this is a state project. In China, the articulations of the leaders are also very important in defining what is at stake for China as a nation.

Lu: Chinese modernization or modernity can be divided into three stages. The lowest stage is material modernization, the second stage is spiritual modernization, the third stage is individual modernization. What they said was to gain the first level, to realize material modernization, there were four perspectives: culture, industry, national defense, and technology. Why they did not say we need a political modernization is because they think if they did it, it would be just like the Western-style democracy and legal system.

Ong: What you said was very interesting in how the Chinese state uses a narrative based on socialist Marxism to construct a linear form of different stages of growth. It is an orthodox, Western Marxist notion.

The point is that it is not macro-micro. It is state articulation of policy versus individual practice, consumption, popular culture. But if you want to talk about popular culture—I think what you are trying to say is that there is this emergence in urban China of a modern sensibility that includes drinking bottled water. I was surprised when I was in China that even beggars had bottled water, bottled water everywhere in China was shocking to me. So in urban China there is an emergence of modern kinds of practices, modern sensibilities very much linked to media and consumption. That's fine, but I wonder whether there is a kind of modernity.

What you say is also at the same time abstract. How do you understand it if you are a member of China, this great country? On an everyday level it is very abstract. What is Chinese modernization—I do not know. Most people do not know what is. So that is an unavoidable abstraction, a ghost-like image: the nation is ghostly. It is not very real. It is mainly an imagined entity. And maybe that's why a lot of people want anthropologists to focus on everyday practice: because it seems real and concrete. We are demonstrating to you how we are modern. We are modern because we drink bottled water. But there is another set of questions.

Nyiri: I rather agree with you—the question is not so much what the elite's concept of modernity is, whether it is the same in the West and in China or not. But I think it would be very difficult to engage your run-of-the-mill capitalist, Western or Chinese, in talking about modernity. I don't think that the elite notions of modernity are different, but the promotion of the state cultural discourse that includes modernity—that is different.

Ong: The priority for the Chinese government is the collective and the material as opposed to the individual and the political. I want to go back to this East–West discourse. When I use “West,” I always mean it as a shorthand because it is too complicated. But I want to also point out the relational: whenever someone says, “I am beautiful,” “I am modern” or “I am intelligent” there is a reference point. So whenever developing countries say they are modern, they have an implicit measure of that in their minds. They try to sort of differentiate themselves, “we are not like them, we are different.” So in that sense I use the term “Western” as a shorthand.

But at the same time I do insist—that is where you disagree with me—there are certain forms that really first came from the West and haven’t taken root, and people do recognize them as being Western. And that’s why they create profound anxiety, because there is the realization that where you take up these Western forms you are being derailed at some level.

Nyiri: “West” as a discursive category for Asia—we all agree on that. People in China, when they speak about the West meaning something Anglo-Saxon, it is quite clear that they do not think about France, Germany; in fact, they exclude them. The point that matters is that they call it the West; they do not call it America. Then is the debate about whether Western modernization, a Western modernity, is a legitimate analytical category for us as researchers or not?

Ong: I am talking about particular forms of organization, of modernization, of distribution of values. I am not talking about “Western” in that huge rhetorical sense. That’s why I emphasize throughout that we should study specific strategies, practices, organizations, that is the best we can do. That’s why I was talking about denaturalizing terms like economy, politics, and culture.

Nyiri: There is a difference in opinions here. But in part it is also a difference in emphasis between disciplines, anthropology versus history. I just wouldn’t think of the concept “West” in terms of either territory or people. I would think “West” is a package of images. In South Africa some people at some times will practice “Western things.” I don’t think that this idea, “Western,” is entirely useless, but on the other hand what Frank Dikötter implies—that there is no single thing called “Western modernity”—is also valid. In general to say “this is Western” about an object or about a theory in principle doesn’t make sense. Only in the context of how people use them.

Modern China is the product of the conjoining of modernist discourses originating in the West and native institutions, historical conditions and native reaction-formations ... diagnosis of power in China is a critique neither simply of the West nor of China’s tradition, but of their offspring: China’s modernity (Yang 1994).

Yang reflects critically on the way Western modernity is being appropriated in China, but perhaps does not dwell enough on the way Chinese culture itself becomes instrumentalized. She says there is a modern part of China, which is the socialist bureaucratic redistributive system. China’s modernity is a socialist modernity—the Chinese government will tell you about it. But the socialist redistribution system hasn’t been very successful: a lot of people have been left out from medical care, pensions, and so on. Yang argues that the failure of the Chinese redistributive system engendered the

proliferation of **guanxi** that was expressed in a specific strategy. People began to use personal connections to all kinds of things they could not get through the government system.

Yang has a dualistic articulation here. The modern part is a publicly articulated collectivist ethic, which is socialist, versus the very private ethics of **guanxi**. That is a very clever way to think about it, but in my view the problem is that Yang treats culture versus modernity as a binary opposition. For Yang, **guanxi** is the bankrupt Chinese culture that has been preserved despite socialism, whereas socialism is the modern part that is not Chinese. I think it is wrong, because everything is culture. Soviet-style organization is Chinese culture too, from the moment it has been appropriated in China.

Under which circumstances will alternative modernities arise?
Are they always a reaction to the universalizing West?

Chinese nationalism was not extremely cultural in its earlier stages. Modernity was a state project, not only in the sense of setting up a socialist state in a late developing country but also in the sense of the deliberate inculcation of “socialist culture” by the Communist Party and the repression of Chinese “feudalism.” But the new post-

Mao version of development, the “reform and opening up” to the rest of the world, has brought about a different relationship to Chinese “feudal” culture. There has been a revitalization of Confucianism, which seems to be the kind of cultural articulation that goes best with capitalism. To say that what the state does is not cultural is wrong.

Flexible accumulation and flexible citizenship

Flexible accumulation

Accumulation is a term used by Pierre **Bourdieu**. He talks about accumulating social capital, educational capital, **cultural capital** as well as financial capital. The idea of **flexible accumulation** comes from David Harvey’s (1989) *The Condition of Post-modernity*. He argues that the contemporary organization of capitalism is horizontal rather than vertical. The dispersal of major industrial production systems over the world has created new forms of accumulation.

In the early 1970s, major corporations began to install themselves all over the world. Economic growth spread to multiple centers with an emphasis on horizontal connections and on flexibility in the forms of capitalist organization in order to maximize profit. If you are an American toaster company, it does not make sense to make toasters—you send them to China to be assembled. You choose the location where conditions are best for making profit.

The flexibility of relocations, of spreading production, of horizontalizing economic processes was enabled by technological, electronic revolutions. Through the use of faxes and e-mail and modern forms of travel, it became easier and easier to have this kind of flexibility, with the effect that Harvey calls **time-space compression**.

The cultural logic of flexible accumulation

In the introduction to *Ungrounded Empires: The Cultural Politics of Modern Chinese Transnationalism* (Ong and Nonini 1997), Donald Nonini and I discuss the vast literature on overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia.

Much of our current understanding of overseas Chinese comes from the experiences of overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia. It is very important to understand that connection, because, we argue in this book, the tropes of Chinese as risk-taking, entrepreneur middlemen, pioneers, came from the study of ethnic Chinese in Southeast Asia. They did not come from the study of the Chinese in mainland China. We argue that the reason for that is that contemporary forms of Chinese market behavior, of flexible ethnic Chinese networks, emerged in the context of Southeast Asia.

Before Chinese traders and laborers were drawn to the colonies by European powers, the Chinese were already there. The notion “tribute system” was used to describe a very complex trade network in Southeast Asia, nominally formalized into relationships with the Chinese emperor.

Duara on the tribute system

Until the late 19th century, the tribute system was the model of relationships between different state formations in the region of the empire that we call China and immediately around it.

In the Chinese and in other imperial states, the edges, the boundaries of the empire, the frontier regions, had many different types of relationship to the center. There were “multiple lords,” multiple and overlapping sovereignties (Hevia 1995). In certain circumstances, certain aspects of sovereignty may have been with the lord of the local state, but the **Qing** emperor claimed some kind of overlordship.

The tribute system was very significant in the regulation of global and regional trade flows. And by the 18th century, before the Europeans arrived, it was, in many significant ways, global. From the **Song** on, you had Arab traders, Indians, Southeast Asians, Japanese, whose scope was much more than regional trade.

The tribute system was both a political order and an effort to regulate trade flows. By the 16th–17th centuries, the Tokugawa shōguns in Japan began to shut down trade and limit it to one or two ports. By the 17th century, the **Qing** do the same. And this is a very interesting question: how and why they wanted trade to be regulated, why they wanted to close it off. It was both to preserve their conception of their political order and because they could not handle the enormous pressure of trade. They did not call it globalization, but they felt the effects. They had political systems that were not so dependent as we are today, in the early 21st century, upon global trade. They could try and close themselves off. Of course, historians argue that this closing off created problems for them ultimately, but they lasted three hundred years. How long could any of our countries last? Maybe twenty years.

The tribute system, thus, was a way of regulating global flows. China was the imperial power in most of the world at that point, and the missions it sent to collect tribute were not unlike today when the American presidential jet goes to some country with a whole bunch of businessmen accompanying him to create contracts. The tribute system

governed trade relations and distributed trade privileges: who had the right to trade and what. And the Portuguese and Dutch got access to Chinese trade only because they were seen as having helped in the southern conquest of the **Qing**.

Elites in China valorize the tribute system, exaggerate its significance. China was just one factor in a plural domain of distant islands. Once in a while it became more significant. For example, a Chinese princess went to Malacca and married the local sultan. But usually, China was so far away, it was irrelevant.

On the other hand, migrants from southern Chinese provinces who had been expelled or simply left had been trading in Southeast Asia for a very long time. Southeast Asian kingdoms, such as Bali, depended on overseas Chinese, Arabs, and Indians for shipping and trade. They didn't allow their own subjects to engage in these commercial activities because that would lay the basis of an alternative power.

When the Europeans came, they made use of these Chinese merchant networks and of indentured labor from China to undertake a transformation of the frontier regions of colonization. Millions of Chinese went to Southeast Asia, Hawaii, South Africa and California to cut down jungles, build railroads and cities.

A middleman minority

In the introduction to *Ungrounded Empires*, we discuss how the Chinese were both desired and hated by the colonial powers. They were desired because they provided cheap labor and capital for the development of colonies; but they were hated as morally and racially inferior competitors. The Chinese were necessary because they were the small middlemen, the retailers who provided all the commodities: coffee, cocoa, rubber, tin, chocolate, hardware, sugar, pepper, and so on. The Chinese collected them and sold them to European firms in Singapore, which then exported them to Europe. We argue that the colonial capitalist context of Southeast Asia gave rise to a particular Chinese style, to certain practices of being Chinese, to what **Bourdieu** calls a *habitus*: a set of principles internalized in the way of thinking, operating, and talking. After all, they were excluded from other kinds of activities: they were only allowed to do commerce but forbidden from owning land.

In many ways they were like the Jews in Europe who, from medieval times, had been confined to certain occupations, and as a result began to cultivate certain skills and practices. They were forced to be risk-taking. They were operating in circumstances where they were utterly unprotected, exploited, and hated. They were adventurers of the highest order, so they developed long-distance networks with China that absorbed the risk. They developed savings societies, associations through which they sent money back to China and brought new laborers in from there. If you go anywhere in Southeast Asia, you will see the Chinese grocer, the Chinese hardware store. Deep in a jungle you will get a plastic bucket and a soap and a candle from this Chinese guy. The shopkeepers also provided financial services: they lent money to the natives to grow crops.

We argue that a lot of these practices were developed in Southeast Asia in the context of frontier capitalism. While also being exploited, the Chinese were money-lenders,

blood-sucking exploiters from the native point of view, because they took high interest for their loans.

That is the context, the cultural logic, then, of flexible accumulation. That is the historical context that led to the epitomization of Chinese as transnational entrepreneurial figures who can operate in different cultural and linguistic domains, extremely versatile, flexible, and capable of handling all types of obstacles.

Today, then, the Asians are the entrepreneurial subjects that the white people used to be. It is the convergence of these different conditions and the importance of China's relations with America that has made the Asian the new Westerner, the new frontier figure.

How to define an entrepreneur? An entrepreneur is not just a risk-taker: he must also translate across different regimes of value. In the conditions of flexible accumulation, it is the capacity to make linkages and to shift from one to another that makes an entrepreneur. You must be able to get some poor village in China to make Levi's jeans at low wages using oppressive, exploitative methods and then translate the process of accumulation from the cultural realm of Chinese village capitalism into that of "high-end" stores like Bloomingdale's in New York City. A lot of Western capitalists cannot do that.

The Asia-Pacific is a critical part of the American frontier today; it will remain the source of American economic dynamism for some time. If you want to have economic power, you need entrepreneurs capable of translating across multiple regimes of value.

Flexible citizenship

It is wrong to think about citizenship merely in terms of possession of legal status. It is very partial to think about citizenship in terms of rights. The notion of citizen in the original meaning referred to a male person with property, a bourgeois. If you did not have property, you couldn't be a real citizen; women did not have citizenship until much later. Marx on the Jewish question talks about the illusory nature of citizenship for many Europeans—workers or Jews—in the 19th century. The notion of enjoying equality was not borne out by their lives.

Citizenship can be defined in many different ways, but perhaps more than anything else, it is a form of economic entitlement. Economic policy can have direct implications for citizenship. In places like Hong Kong and Singapore you have a very extreme form of the capitalization of citizenship. These globalizing Asian cities have devised biopolitical strategies to attract global talents: mainly from Asia, but also Asians who have migrated to the United States. On the other hand, the high-tech hubs in Silicon Valley are increasingly dependent on Asian professionals and managers and on the trans-Pacific production chains of high-tech goods. The point is that the national space is no longer organized only according to citizenship, and that citizens and foreigners are producing new spaces, nodes,

Which of the concepts in this chapter appear relevant to your work?

Or interesting? Or crazy?

- imagined communities?
- moral economy?
- flexible citizenship?
- alternative modernities?
- (alternative) globalization(s)?
- specific technologies for producing an idea of the nation?

and networks of production, or to use a term coined by Deleuze and Guattari (1998), assemblages that consist of capitalists, corporations, workers, technologies, and so on.

What I call **flexible citizenship** is the set of transnational practices of mobile entrepreneurs who use a flexible strategy in relation to places of work and residence. Mobile Chinese managers on the Pacific Rim—Malaysian, Hong Kong, PRC, or Taiwanese—accumulate citizenships in the family to maximize capital accumulation, deflect control of laws, evade the disciplining regimes of family and workplace, and create flexible capitalist networks capable of converting values across spheres of worth.

Conclusion

I find it useful to study the complex of forces we call nationalisms from a diversity of angles:

- as imagined communities dependent on print media,
- as national identities linked to infrastructures, state apparatuses, etc., that constitute a specific people and territory,
- as nationalist discourses about ethno-racial distinctions and hierarchies.

Nationalist discourses emerge from a variety of sources. It is useful to think about nationalism not as a unified set of narratives, but as a temporary set of contestory claims.

When we talk about state nationalism, we need to consider its role in legitimating the state and in the moral regulation of the citizenry. As late-developing modern nation-states, Asian states tend to play major roles in defining “national culture.” The Asian state—South Korean, Chinese, Taiwanese, Singaporean and Malaysian, for instance—is quite embroiled with what can be described as regulations of moral citizenship, beyond its juridico-legal regulations. But the moral authority of the state in the cultural integration of the nation into a single whole is increasingly hard to sustain in the face of globalized mass media, the rise of individualistic orientations, intensifying rates of travel and contact with other societies and ideas. Multilateral agencies are now trying to redefine political subjectivity beyond the cultural.

The Chinese government has many times articulated what it means to be Chinese, and it has been more successful than other states in this role because of the unity of Chinese people behind what they see as China’s thrust to global status.

But an emerging challenge to ideas of national destiny and cultural difference comes from multilateral agencies, global companies, and nongovernmental organizations. There are a number of implications here. First, multilateral agencies such as the World Trade Organization, and global companies make inroads into major national institutions such as the central banking system. Such integration into global regulatory and economic networks shows the limits of sovereignty, requiring governments to be more flexible in mediating or forging these relationships to global agencies and corporations. Elsewhere, I have used the term “graduated sovereignty” to denote how differentiated connections have regulatory effects on specific zones of development within the national territory. Second, NGOs and other social movements seek to moralize citizenship not in terms of specific cultures or nations but rather in terms of our common humanity. This reconceptualization of human worth apart from loyalty to a particular state subverts the concepts of nationalism and citizenship.

Chapter 2

The Legacy of Empires and Nations in East Asia

PRASENJIT DUARA

Overview

In this chapter I will present a broad historical overview of the problems of nationalism, transnationalism and globalism, both conceptually and in terms of Chinese developments. To survey the changing nature of sovereignty and political formations from the 19th century until the present in China, we will be looking at three stages.

Stage 1: The tribute system

Until the late 19th century, the tribute system is the model of relationships between different state formations in the region of the empire that we call China and immediately around it.

In the Chinese and in other imperial states, the edges, the boundaries of the empire, the frontier regions, had many different types of relationship to the center. So you have “multiple lords,” multiple and overlapping sovereignties (Hevia 1995). In certain circumstances, certain aspects of sovereignty may have been with the lord of the local state, but the Qing emperor claimed overlordship.

Stage 2: The territorial nation-state system

The second stage is the period between 1900 and 1980. During this period, the model of the territorial nation-state rules largely unchallenged. Nation-states’ jurisdiction is marked very clearly by formally demarcated territorial boundaries. This has significant implications, because the new territorial boundaries create the idea of homogeneous sovereignty. There is no competing authority but that which comes from the center.

Let me give you one example of how territory becomes part of identity. When I was in northeast China, in Changchun in 1993–94, my wife accompanied me. She taught English at a local university. She used some American method of teaching, where you say, “OK, suppose—just to use your imagination—there is going to be a catastrophe in the world, and you can let ten people go into the survival capsule. Which ten are the most valuable ten people that you can put in?” You would expect people to say things like doctors and engineers, nuclear scientists. But a historian was often among the top five! This was very flattering to me. So she asked, “Why is the historian there?” They

said, “After the catastrophe, when we come out, we have to know where our national boundaries are.”

In making maps, it is very difficult to show regions with overlapping sovereignties. Map-making is a product of the period of territorial jurisdictions. Countries are marked with one color: you have shades for physical but not for the political attributes. Why can't you produce maps where some areas are more pink and more yellow? We don't think of it that way. But what is even more interesting now, in this postmodern age of the Internet, is that you can produce a three-dimensional map with all kinds of changeable and overlapping boundaries to represent a polity as not a homogenized system but one with variations.

But that was not the mode of thinking of the period of nation-states. It was a homogenized system of equal territorial jurisdictions, derived from what in European history is known as the **Westphalian system** of competing states.

In the tribute system, frontier zones were very often zones of negotiation: when I have power I can try and control it; otherwise it goes somewhere else. One of the things that happen with the transition to the nation-state is that borders get demarcated, lines are drawn on the map. And then you put military resources around it to defend it.

Stage 3: The deterritorialization of the nation-state

Then we have the third stage from 1980 to the present. The breaking point, of course, is gradual, between 1978—the “opening” of China—and 1989, the time when the Cold War ends and global capitalism becomes a much more powerful force in the world than it had been before. Between 1980 and 1990, there is a point of demarcation for a great part of the world: the end of the Cold War. To some extent, this stage is the deterritorialization of the system of territorial nation-states. By that I do not mean that these territorial nation-states have gone away. No, the idea of the territorial nation-state continues to exist; there still are demarcated boundaries, and they are considered to be elements of great defense significance. But this territorial boundary is not as significant for all purposes.

The idea of the nation is no longer so much of a homogeneous nation that is limited territorially. Rather, the nation becomes shaped much more by a cultural narrative, by how you develop a story about who you are as a people. It can be an ethnic, racial, or linguistic narrative that defines the body of the nation. As a result, some people are included and some people are excluded, particularly on the peripheries, because very often the territorial nation-state included many different languages, groups, and peoples.

Duara on his conceptual approach

My work has tended to focus on the history of China—though frequently within a comparative context with India and Japan—during the first half of the twentieth century. This is the time when the ideas of modernity and nationalism were beginning to radically transform non-Western societies. However, my perspective on these issues does not derive from a modernization perspective, which sees these as necessary and desirable goals, but from viewing the entire transformation as an immensely complex process. In this process, there

were winners and losers, there was the promise of emancipation at the cost of eliminating cultures and people, and the narrative of progress which rewrote history to serve nationalism. There was also the gap between the global process and local situations, between elite vision and popular resistance, and between loyalty to the nation-state and forms of transnational and local identities. In this chapter, I explore not only how these relationships were different from earlier ones, but also the extent to which contemporary globalization produces different forces and relationships.

I am currently finishing a book on Manchukuo, the wartime state in northeast China. This is a taboo subject in China scholarship, because it was a Japanese puppet state. You are not allowed to talk about it except to talk about who was the victim and who was the oppressor. But at the time, the leaders of Manchukuo tried very hard to make it at least appear as a nation. And that is very interesting in itself, because at that time Japan and the rest of the world still had colonies. So why do you need to present it as a nation? It was the first case that really tried the League of Nations, the first international body that emerged to decide what a sovereign nation is. Of course nobody knew what a sovereign nation was, there were so many different criteria at that time. From that point of view, no matter how much imperialism there was, it is a very interesting exercise and reveals a lot about the relationship between nationalism and imperialism and communism.

The main argument of this chapter

The basic argument that I want to make is that the claim that since 1980 or so the nation-state has been weakening because globalization has been becoming more important is a false statement of the problem. With globalization, you do not necessarily see a weakening of the nation-state. Rather, what you get is a reterritorialization of the nation-state, which includes the idea of deterritorialization. Deterritorialization means that the territorial nation-state is no longer the most significant entity. The cultural narrative that formulates the shape of the nation is much more significant.

The territorial nation-state also had its narrative, a dominant narrative coming out of the Enlightenment. The only form of description of the nation is the territory into which you were born. No matter what language you speak, you are a citizen. That was the narrative of the territorial nation-state. Now, in reterritorialization, the nation-state in many ways becomes transformed to respond, not to the territorial narrative of a nation, but to a modern ethnic or cultural narrative, with its different community.

My first conclusion here is that there are losers and winners in this transition. There are people who are included more significantly in the national narrative than others. One of the changes is in terms of the constituencies. Who is the constituency of the new nationalism, and who were the constituencies of the territorial nation? It seems that the peripheral peoples, people who are minorities or people who are in the regions that were considered backward, were in fact equal citizens of the territorial nation. In the Soviet thinking and the Chinese Communist thinking influenced by it, not only were they considered equal citizens, they were given affirmative action, special rights. As the narrative of the nation changes, the constituency also changes. These minorities and peripheral people become losers in the process. Other regions that are tied more to globalizing forces become more dominant. In the Chinese case, you have a coastal area that has much more connections to overseas capital, and you have new

narratives that link foreign countries with which this area interacts with the conception of China, narratives about Confucianism or Asian values or “we are the children of Emperor Yan and the Yellow Emperor.” The narratives of these emperors become much more dominant in this reterritorialization of the nation.

My second conclusion about what I see in this change—and this is much more of a conceptual point—is that there has been a change in the nature of nationalist ideology. It has become dynamic, volatile, and changeable. And a great deal of it has to do with its commodification. It is driven by market forces. In the territorial phase of nationalism, there was an effort to protect it from market forces. Nationalist ideology was considered a state privilege. What happens once market forces or other popular forces become as much a driver of nationalism as the state?

The tribute system

Multiple sovereignty

“Sovereignty” comes out of the idea of a territorially bounded entity that has homogeneous and noncompeting sources of authority. So is it in fact possible to apply the notion of sovereignty in the pre-nation-state situation? This is the problem of incommensurability: the pre-20th century notion of political power is not understandable in the same way as we understand modern sovereignty, because they are based on very different principles.

This is a very important problem. Because, after all, how do territorial nation-states decide what their territory is? In the case of certain countries in Western Europe, which originated and evolved these ideas, state boundaries had a little more historical foundation. But when nationalism becomes disseminated across the rest of the world, all societies have to scramble to decide what their territorial nation-state is. Ex-colonies or semicolonies use the boundaries of the empire that they are fighting—the British Empire for the Indians, the Qing Manchu Empire for the Chinese nationalists—to demarcate and claim national territory.

But imperial territory was not set up as sovereign territory. The principles of sovereignty did not apply. To think that somehow historically this always belonged to a certain country involves a sense of belonging that did not exist at that time. People did not have a homogenized sense of belonging. And yet the whole international system had no way but to behave as if the older ideas were commensurable with the new ideas.

Hevia shows in *Cherishing Men from Afar* (Hevia 1995) how political authority, what we call sovereignty today, was established in **late imperial China**.

Encompassment

What was, according to Hevia, the relationship between political formations in the Chinese Empire and in the wider Chinese world order? It was defined significantly by the tribute system. Hevia says that if you look at the different relationships between the imperial center in China and different kinds of political centers outside the provincial administrations, you find relationships of mutual encompassment.

The idea of encompassment comes from the work of the French anthropologist

and Sanskritist Louis Dumont, who talks about it in the case of India (Dumont 1980). He shows how religion encompasses political authority, as opposed to the political encompassing religious matters.

Hevia's argument about mutual encompassment tries to get at a phenomenon for which we do not really have a vocabulary, because we think of it in terms of our modern categories, where you have relationships between separate entities. The relationships between the multitude of lords are ritual relationships. When the Qianlong emperor of China met the Tibetan Dalai Lama or the Panchen Lama he did so not in the imperial palace but in another area, in a formation which displayed symbols of Tibetan Lamaism. He exercised himself as a lord over a lesser lord, so in his view the lesser lord was encompassed within a conception that gave some kind of recognition of Tibetan specificity. But Tibetan accounts reflect a different view of the same events: that the Chinese emperor comes down the steps to greet the lama. The Tibetan conception emphasizes that the gifts given by the emperor to the Lama recognize the superior position of the Lama as the intellectual and spiritual teacher and leader. And therefore the Lama's interpretation rereads that exchange not as between a superior and an inferior lord, but as between the spiritual teacher and the political authority. And the spiritual teacher is superior in some ways. So it is a very different form of encompassment, and in that theatre, where politics are being staged ritualistically, you can go home with your different conceptions.

And if the Chinese Empire is weak at that point or the political circumstances are such, then the Lama can declare himself—to his own people in any case—the superior religious force, and frame the Chinese emperor in Buddhist terms as the ruler that is bound to the Lama. Other lords, such as the Mongols, could also make their break with the Chinese ruler at a time when they felt the empire was weak. But at other times, the imperial center could have a very powerful pull.

It is now well known that the Qing emperor was not simply a Chinese emperor, not simply the Son of Heaven. He was many things. He was the Bodhisattva Manjusri when he went to worship the Buddha; he was the Ruler of Rulers when he went to the Potala Palace in Lhasa, he was the Aisingioro chief when he was in Manchuria. And the identities he was trying to create ritualistically were very different. The Japanese in 1940 had a ritual where Pu Yi, the emperor of Manchukuo, came out of a tent, reborn as the younger brother of the Japanese emperor and a younger child of Amaterasu, the Japanese founding goddess. This was a way of recreating the tie between imperial dynasties. But it had a political purpose: to make him a younger brother, a junior partner in this relationship.

Ritualistic performance

The notion of ritualistic performance is very important in our understanding of this premodern polity and of how notions of sovereignty were much more negotiable and flexible. They produced their own tensions when the balance of power shifted. This allowed the little principalities in what we now call Xinjiang affect independence right into the mid-19th century, despite becoming actively colonized by the Chinese in the 18th century. In some cases, they did not send tribute to the Chinese emperor but asked the emperor to send tribute to them. This kind of situation depended very

much on both the power politics of the moment and on the idea of mutual encompassment.

This very different kind of conception means we have to be very careful when applying 20th-century categories. Yet nationalism is so much a part of our own subjectivity that it is very hard to think outside it.

Regulation of trade through the tribute system

The tribute system was very significant in the regulation of global and regional trade flows. By the 18th century, before the Europeans arrived, it was, in many significant ways, global. From the **Song** on, you had Arab traders, Indians, Southeast Asians, Japanese, whose scope was much more than regional trade.

The tribute system was in some ways the political order; it was also an effort to regulate trade flows. We know that by the 16th–17th centuries, the Tokugawa shōguns in Japan began to shut down trade and limit it to one or two places. By the 17th century, the Chinese did the same. Their conception of the political order could not handle the enormous pressure of trade. They did not call it globalization, but they felt the effects.

The tribute system was a way of regulating global flows. China was the imperial power in most of the world at that point, and the missions it sent to collect tribute were not unlike today when the American presidential jet goes to some country with businessmen accompanying him to create contracts. The tribute system governed trade relations and distributed trade privileges: who had the right to trade and what. The Portuguese and Dutch got access to Chinese trade only because they were seen as having helped in the southern conquest of the **Qing**.

Universality and differentiation among members of the tribute system

We do not need to go into how China became a territorial nation-state. Suffice it to say that the most critical phase in the transformation was the period starting about 1895, with the Sino-Japanese War, but also the **Qing Dynasty's** *xinzheng* reforms (1902–1909), which created the administrative structures of a national polity and new types of education. This process ironically led to the fall of the monarchy in 1911. By the time of the **May Fourth movement**, there had already developed ideas of a kind of a nation, and the idea of a **geo-body**, became very important.

An instance of the importance of the geo-body was that old territories that nobody seemed to care for suddenly began to appear in the idea of “lost territories.” When the Japanese occupied northeast China and created the puppet state of Manchukuo in 1932, what was considered a backward, peripheral, dispensable frontier suddenly came to be seen as lost territory.

It is interesting to see—also in other cases, such as in Russian–Chinese relations—which areas are considered lost territory and which areas are considered just gone. When does the idea come about that something that has gone has to be retrieved, and when is something considered beyond even commenting on?

Lomanov on the irreconcilable histories of Sino-Russian treaties

The Treaty of Nerchinsk of 1689 is regarded as good and equal in the Chinese narration of history and bad and unequal in the Russian version. There is no way to produce a coherent history of Sino-Russian relations because all policies that in the Russian narrative are positive are negative in the Chinese narrative, and vice versa. And what is equal in Russian histories is unequal in Chinese histories. It is a problem of compatibility in historical narratives. The Chinese say that the Nerchinsk Treaty was an equal treaty, but the Russians say it was signed under military pressure from China, when the Russian delegation to China was surrounded by Qing troops. The Nerchinsk Treaty acknowledged Chinese suzerainty over most of Russia's current Amur Province, the southern half of Khabarovsk Region, and the whole of the Maritime Region, but an unexplored strip was left undelineated, pending further settlement.

The 1858 Treaty of Aigun and the 1860 Treaty of Peking, by contrast, are treated as equal and good by the Russian narrative of history and bad and unequal by the Chinese. The Treaty of Aigun gave Russia control of the left bank of the Amur River, and the Treaty of Peking gave it the right bank of the Ussuri and granted Russian vessels navigating rights.

The example of the Ryūkyū Islands

One of the most interesting examples of the tribute system is the Ryūkyū Islands, today's Okinawa. They were very interested in giving tribute. Tribute is, after all, exchange, it is another form of encompassment. You get rights, when you pay tribute, to have certain trade. Okinawa was a very important point in the Pacific trade of exchange of goods from Japan, Southeast Asia, and the Chinese mainland. By the early 19th century, the most important political authority for the Liuqiu Islands (that's the Chinese spelling) was Japan. That's where they paid most of their tribute, and that's where it was determined who would be their rulers. Nonetheless, they continued to pay tribute to China for a long time. They acknowledged two masters in order to gain economic advantage.

Transcendent polities

In most political systems in world history, the political system does not see its role simply as that of sustaining its own power. It is always associated with some kind of greater purpose, whether it is the early Christian idea, the Kingdom of Heaven, or, in the Chinese context, the ideal moral society, the return to the age of the sage kings, the ideal of the *junzi* (the Confucian gentleman) as the ruler, who also expresses the Heaven's Way. That is what I mean by transcendent polities.

Look at the role of the Chinese emperor. In the later empire we have understandings of Chinese rulership that put Mencius' idea of *minben*, of the people as the basis, at the heart of it. But his role is also one of cosmological interpretation, of creating harmony between Heaven and the human world, and of performing rituals that mediate the relationship between nature and Heaven, between society and Heaven, etc. He has a very powerful ritual role, signifying the higher purpose of his rulership. The same

can also be found in Western society. After the **Treaty of Westphalia**, which brought about the establishment of the interstate system and the jurisdiction of territorial states in Europe, the idea was also that each state would have control over religion. This religious purpose was very important, and there were communities in these societies that were not happy with just having a territorial state whose goal was power for itself (Koselleck 1988). There were groups that wanted to reunite the meaning of rule, the meaning of politics with a transcendent purpose, with God, with morality. Koselleck interprets both freemasonry and the French Revolution in these terms: that they wanted to overcome the distinction between politics and religion, to reunite politics and religion for a greater purpose.

The intrinsic contradiction of the Westphalian model

The **Peace of Westphalia** created the system of demarcated, territorial states. This idea then became exported to the rest of the world: that absolute sovereign authority is derived from territory, and that other states should respect the territorial boundaries that have been established.

But there is an intrinsic contradiction in that idea, because after all the goal of having territorial states is competition. So the territorial system is really a temporary set of rules, as it were, for controlling competition. But the goal of competition is to become the most powerful. In the end it would be empire again, when there are no competitors left, because you gain all the economic, political, and other resources.

What nation-state and nationalism are about internally is competition; making yourself a strong body. But why do you make yourself a strong body? In order to withstand encroachment by others, in order to compete with the others. So it is also, externally, in order to get what's out there.

The territorial state as means to competitiveness

It is very interesting that the goal of nation-states through the 19th century was to look like empires, to have colonies to do your work for you. And the country that got the message most successfully was Japan, which was then able to transform itself into a nation-state and become an imperial power itself. Either you eat or you get eaten—this system emerges out of the nation-state. The nation-state is a way to leverage yourself out of being somebody who is eaten and to become somebody who eats, who is able to compete in this world. So to become a nation-state is a whole process of national formation. How do you make yourself into a nation-state?

From empire to nation: problems of transition

The world-system approach

Some of the most useful writings on this is the writing on the world-system theories. I am thinking not so much of the work of Immanuel Wallerstein (e.g. Wallerstein 1974), whose name is perhaps the most famous amongst the world-system theorists, but the work of Giovanni Arrighi. He has a very important book published in 1994,

The Long Twentieth Century: Money, Power, and the Origins of our Times (Arrighi 1994). He tries to understand the whole system of competitive states and globalization as a 500-year form. There is the work of André Gunder Frank (e.g. 1992) as well, who argues that the world-system was really established more than 500 years ago and China was the most important center of this world-system until 1800, when it fell behind for the first time. Wallerstein is very simple and clear: “In the world of the 19th–early 20th century, where you have imperialism, unless you are a nation-state, you become a colony.”

Incommensurability of the nation-state with older imperial practices

The Japanese government in the 1870s received complaints of clashes between fishermen from the Ryūkyū Islands and the Gaoshan indigenous people of Taiwan. The Japanese government turned to the Qing court to find out who was responsible. The Qing court's first reaction was what the first reaction of a nonterritorial state is: at the frontier, we let the barbarians govern each other, let them all be. The Qing did not want to take any responsibility for this because they knew it would mean indemnities for people who had been killed. Then the Japanese government replied: so you mean it is not part of your territorial jurisdiction. And Li Hongzhang, the Qing statesman—who knew something—got worried: No, no, we'd better do something about this, because it means they will take it because we say it is not part of our territory. And he made Taiwan into a province in 1885.

Where do you draw the boundaries?

It is not clear at all. The first thing that happens in 1911—when the Qing Empire collapses—is the establishment of Mongolia. The Mongol princes say we were part of the imperial Manchu concept, and whatever is being established now, we are not part of that. So Outer Mongolia becomes established as a separate state. This is the problem of incommensurability between the empire and the nation: the Mongols saw themselves as imperial subjects but as confederates of the Manchus, not necessarily as part of the Chinese nation.

At this point of transition from empire to nation-state, it was crucial to successfully establish your claim as a nation. Because Han Chinese nationalism centered around the imperial, because it claimed the imperial state as the nation-state, it was more developed at that point. But among the smaller nationalities, among their intellectual elites, there was a very highly developed sense of Mongol nationalism, Tibetan nationalism, and others. Mongols were the most advanced in this, they recognized what was going on and successfully achieved separation. The Tibetans, it seems, were in a situation where, for whatever reasons, political consciousness had not developed to express nationality; it was done much more in terms of their religious leadership.

Ambiguous mapping

If you look at some of the early **Kuomintang** maps, you see that they include the northern part of Burma, and some include part of Iran and parts of North India. All different claims, of course. But actually it is always better that these claims are so big,

because nobody can take them seriously. It is as though you have the claim just in case somebody else makes a claim. Much smaller variations on maps of the Sino-Russian border have created serious tension.

Lomanov on Sino-Russian treaties pre- and post-Westphalia

The Treaty of Nerchinsk (1689) was a pre-Westphalian treaty: this is ours, that is yours, and what is in between we don't talk about. It was a treaty that could be interpreted in the way the reader wanted. But the two later treaties were typical nation-state treaties. There you could have only one interpretation.

Before the treaty, the relationship between the Qing court and the tribes that lived in this area was completely based upon the tribute system. It was a case of overlapping or fuzzy identities. They started to overlap when Russia was expanding eastward and China was slowly expanding northbound. Finally there was a military conflict, and at Nerchinsk there was a decision not to demarcate the boundary but just have both sides step back and keep this pre-nation-state situation on the border.

This system survived more than a hundred and fifty years, from 1689 till 1857. In the 19th century of course it was a clear-cut and very fast demarcation according to the norms of the nation-states, but even the Aigun treaty designated the region east of the Ussuri—the current Maritime Province of Russia—as a joint dominion. But this was happening when other nations were pressing China to accept the Western definition of “border.” The Russians sensed competition. Just in case we want this piece of land later, to prevent some other nation from getting it—they thought—it is better to clear up these overlapping or fuzzy identities along the border, to make a clean cut, a border corresponding to the Western definition.

In a cultural sense, this idea that you have the map but you don't take it completely seriously is similar to the premodern sense of the nation—it is not “zero-sum.” There is this claim, you can take it, you can leave it, you can opt in, you can opt out. What this reminds me of is those business school books about how to deal with a Chinese. They'll teach you that “the Chinese mind is different, because they do not have the ‘either-or’ logic, the zero-sum-game: if it goes to you, it does not go to me. Instead, it is a non-zero-sum-game that is beneficial for both sides.” We have to be careful about understanding this “play” with the map in its historical context rather than as an ethnically and culturally “Chinese” view. I think there are circumstances where the maps become real for everybody, when you believe in it, and there are circumstances when you play politics with the map.

One of the problems for many new nationalisms outside the heartland of the formation of the nation-state was that more nationalisms emerged than nation-states. If you think of it, the heartland of the nation-state is basically France, the United States, Britain, and some Latin American countries. Here we have the idea of citizenship, and national rights get incorporated into the formation of the nations.

Two of the most prominent Chinese nationalist revolutionaries, **Zhang Taiyan (Zhang Binglin)** and **Liang Qichao**, were in charge of frontier policy. What to do with the old frontiers of the empire? They began encouraging Han Chinese settlement, which had already developed in the late **Qing** period, so that there could not be a very clear territorial claim from any group.

This was not a problem only of China. This was a problem of all these countries that were breaking away from empires, and we are still living with these issues in the Balkans, for example. And it was also the problem in South Asia, in the Indian sub-continent. It came a little later, with the British Empire dissolved. Who was going to represent India? Of course, the Hindu nationalists, people like Nehru and Gandhi, believed that there was only one India, that India was the same as the British Empire. Just like the Chinese revolutionaries believed the Chinese nation was the same as the **Qing Empire**. But in the Indian case you had very highly developed counternationalist movements led by those who would make Pakistan, and later Bangladesh.

To some extent, as I said, the problem is intrinsic to the **Westphalian model**. You are supposed to be content with your boundaries, but in fact if the goal is competition, then you want to make sure you maximize your territory. You begin to get this instability with the decolonization and with the overthrowing of old empires, in places like China and other parts of the colonized world.

Later on, “minority” national identity was actually encouraged by Communist governments. The Soviet revolution promoted the idea that people should have nationalities. Rogers Brubaker points out that for various reasons, Lenin and Stalin encouraged nationalism among “national minorities” (Brubaker 1996). It may have been there among the intellectual elite, but they encouraged it and tried to promote nation formation through Soviet policies. But what they did not create was the idea of a Soviet nationalism, i.e., an umbrella over these nationalisms. They had the idea of a Soviet state, an object of civic loyalty but not a myth of nationalism that could make people feel that they were Soviet nationals as well. And so in 1991, when the Soviet Union breaks up, the people in the Central Asian republics and Eastern Europe feel much more nationalistic than they felt in 1919.

Despite the existence of minority nationalisms in China, however, the idea of a super-Chinese nation, or at least the idea of China as multinational, before and during the Mao period seems to have been more successful than that of a super-Soviet nation.

“Children of the Yellow Emperor”

One of the most important elements of modern Chinese nationalism was the idea that “we are the children of the Yellow Emperor.” Now, who are the children of the Yellow Emperor? The Yellow Emperor is a mythic figure—but you can still get into trouble for saying that. The historian Gu Jiegang, who was the first one to say so, has been brought up again and again in the media to be criticized. But what is his relationship to those people with whom the Chinese had biological or affinal (marital) links earlier, and who are now classed non-Han?

Nyiri on narratives of Chineseness on the periphery

Nowadays, when we look at people on the periphery—that is, “minorities”—and think of to what extent they consider themselves Chinese, we usually think in terms of resistance, implying that they do not. But if you look at northern Burma and northern Thailand, outside China’s boundary, then you’ll find in some cases the opposite situation: people who

want to be seen as Chinese, and whom this desire for Chineseness enables to think of themselves as the local metropolitans. Thus, the Shan in Burma will show you family genealogies with Chinese ancestors. For them, being in some way Chinese is a means of distinguishing themselves from the Burman majority in the nation-state they live in, of resisting Burman dominance, and even of positioning themselves above the Burmans by linking themselves to a “superior” political and cultural tradition.

I do not have an answer to this but my instinct is that these would now be excluded, because those marriages had been at a very high level (that is, tributary kings would send their daughters to the imperial court), and the new nation was often based, whether in China or in the peripheral regions, on the overthrowing of those elites. But it is also interesting to see this question in terms of what Benedict Anderson says about official nationalism. He says there is a phase in the late 19th century when there is an effort by all dynasties to become nationalists.

Anderson's Imagined Communities
see pp. 5–6

We can see this in the case of the Qing as well. The dynasties in Europe or Asia or anywhere in the world, had not thought of themselves as part of the national community. They thought of themselves in terms of aristocratic relations with other aristocrats.

That was their community. Then, in the late 19th century, especially when they began to see that nationalist movements were emerging, they tried to change that and see themselves as Chinese or Dutch.

Religious and universalist ideals and their modern transformation

Syncretic and Buddhist religious societies that had emerged in China and Tibet exercised considerable influence on people's identities, and those identities were not national in the same way as those of the republican government: they were religious or universalistic. Dai Jitao, a **Kuomintang** leader and a socialist nationalist, picked up similar ideas in both Tibet and China and started a journal called *Xin Yaxiya* (New Asia) in 1929.

Xin Yaxiya professed a Chinese ideology of Pan-Asianism, which expressed solidarity with the anti-imperialist movement in Asia: struggles in Malaya, the East Indies, India, etc. But it was also very important to create some sense of brotherhood with the peripheral peoples of what was becoming part of the Chinese national territory, especially its western and southwestern parts (Duara 2001).

Dai Jitao was also important in forging the links between Tibetan Buddhism and Chinese Buddhism, in appreciation for Tibetan Buddhism, but also with the intention to bring Tibetans into the nation through religious connections. But the left wing of the Kuomintang was antireligious. A political leader during the warlord period, called Xiong Xiling, wrote a very interesting letter to **Chiang Kai-shek**, which I found in the archives in October 2000. He writes that the Kuomintang movement in the 1920s and early 1930s was based on antireligion, while the imperial formation of China was built upon religious connections. Our people are great believers of all kinds of popular

religion. How do you expect to create a strong nation or any kind of national bond if you go around attacking all these religious connections? And the last example that he gave was your own revolution—meaning the 1927–1928 Kuomintang **Northern Expedition** that established republican rule in most of China—had been made possible by soldiers who after they had seen so many killings, have become Buddhist monks as a way to atone for the sufferings they had caused. Now, by attacking religion you are turning against all your soldiers who made the revolution possible. **Chiang Kai-shek** himself was ambivalent about this idea. He was a Christian himself. But the redemptive societies had a religious idealism that was universalistic. They wanted to save the world; therefore national boundaries for them felt artificial.

The point is that they were not simply old-fashioned religious groups; they were part of the modern transformation. They felt that they were progressive; they said that progress could only be saved by the contribution of religious thought. Otherwise, modernity and progress were too materialistic and they would just lead to a consumer society and greed. We know the power of these kinds of religious ideology in the modern world; they keep appearing, and we cannot understand them as some leftover from the past. We have to see them as modern phenomena. They are one response to modernity. Just like today, religious societies then attracted a following not just among peasants, but among educated urban and professional groups.

The mobilization of transterritorial identities and diasporas

The territorial state had to deal with the issue of people with transnational aspirations, with universalist ideas as well. Here I am talking about *huaqiao*, the overseas Chinese. The territorial nation-state needed the resources of these people, who were already very wealthy at a time when China was struggling a great deal. At the time of the Republican Revolution there was a great effort to mobilize their support. First they wanted to use them as spies. But then both the Qing government and the revolutionaries realized that they could get money and support from them. It is well known that Sun Yat-sen spent a great deal of his life among various overseas Chinese communities gathering support. But in the early years the Qing government was much more successful.

The problem here was that the *huaqiao* faced the appeal of different loyalties. This would become a problem much later as well, especially in Southeast Asia. They were told that they were part of a different territorial state, whether it was Thailand or Indonesia or Malaysia or the USA. Their loyalties were supposed to be to the territorial state. The Chinese state was also supposed to have the loyalty of people within its territories, and not necessarily of those who were outside its territories.

But there we see that nationalist ideology cannot be restricted just to a territory. Transterritorial sentiments are mobilized for political purposes. But at some level they are contradictory to the ideology of a territorial nation-state. And they become, in the changing nationalist ideology that I will talk about in the third stage, nonterritorial, deterritorialized.

Creating citizens

This is probably the biggest problem that modern nation-states have to deal with, the classic problem, not just in Asia but in Europe as well. Until the late 19th century, most peasants in what we consider the very advanced nation-state of France did not think of themselves as French citizens. They had different local, religious, and communal types of identity, and the nation-state had to create an education and a system of symbols to make them start thinking of themselves as Frenchmen (Weber 1976). Even in a country like France, it did not happen until the late 19th century. And until the 1870s, only two percent of the population of Italy spoke what we now recognize as Italian.

Nation-state solutions and agendas

The national project versus popular religion

In the Western understanding, religion comes to occupy a compartment of life. In a peasant society like that of China, religiosity is very diffuse; it pervades every aspect of life in some way. This makes it very practical because it does not produce any strong notion of taboos.

I have studied several gods that were important in Chinese popular culture, like the god Guandi (Guan Gong). Every kind of contract, whether the sale of land or the start of an irrigation association to share water from a limited source, is often sealed in the temple with some invocation. The idea of Guandi is used to create some kind of *xinyong*, trust. In the absence of law, religion often plays this role. Economic activity is inseparable from religious ideas: most important market days happened to be on the days of temple fairs.

But in the modern nation-state, the purpose of nationalism is to make people into modern citizens, in order to be able to compete internationally. Well, if you spend your time going to religious festivities and temple fairs, you are not a modern citizen in that conception. To be a modern citizen, you have to be mobilizing your energies to build your skills and professional abilities. Religion is seen as a waste of time and inimical to a modern national being. Many early nation-building projects, even long before the Communists came to power, were combating “superstition,” *mixin*, and all popular religion was considered to be in the realm of *mixin*.

In the policy reforms of the Qing government, the village temples, around which so much of village life was oriented, were taken over and attempted to be made into modern schools. That meant that the property of the temples, which in North China was often the only communal property, could no longer be used to hold temple fairs or for other communal purposes, and was being used for education. There was resistance to this among the peasants. Ordinary peasants did not understand the purpose of the transformation, and they did not see the benefits coming. Instead, what they saw was that whole patterns of life were being changed and attacked.

Citizenship as a contract

The basic promise the modern territorial nation offers in return for all this transformation is the promise of citizenship, or civic nationalism. It is an implicit understanding

that you affirm loyalty to the nation-state because you recognize that you develop some rights as a citizen. These rights, in the 19th-century European context, we understand principally as political rights such as freedom of speech, freedom of movement.

But the notion of rights has been expanded since the early 20th century. The first important expansion beyond immediate political rights was the idea that nations have rights too, the right to self-determination. Through the 19th century it was not thought that it was everyone's birthright to be a part of the nation. Some people's birthright was to be colonized or assimilated into some other nation. But suddenly at the end of the 19th century, the notion that a people has collective rights as a nation emerges, and if you do not have those rights, you are slaves.

Political and economic rights

But then, the issue of individual political rights becomes problematic because they conflict with national rights. The idea that the national collectivity is more important than the individual emerges in the thinking of people like **Liang Qichao**, or in the Japanese case, **Katō Hiroyuki**. Until the end of the 19th century, they were somewhat responsive to the liberal idea of individual rights, but immediately after that, in the early 20th century, when social Darwinist ideas and collectivist ideas of national rights appear, they say that individual rights only create more problems, and now it is more important to assert collective national rights. Instead of political rights, at the level of individual rights now comes the promise of economic rights. You can see this in the Kuomintang constitution, which contains the idea of political tutelage: you have to learn how to be a politically right-bearing person, and we will teach you how to do that later, but what we promise first is to give you a livelihood. This is the basis of understanding in the People's Republic of China too.

Inadequacy of civic nationalism

We find, however, that nationalism can't simply be a civic nationalism based on rights, that it also has to appeal to ideas of deep histories and ethnic, racial, cultural identities for mobilization. Because one of the most important aspects of nationalism is that it has the moral authority to tell people that they should sacrifice for the nation more than what the nation can do for them.

Before the modern nation, the only kinds of authority that could ask for that had been religious authorities. The point is that you have to accept the authority of those who are saying that you are doing something for others. You have to accept that it is indeed for others, and not for the people in power. One of my most important projects is to understand the source of this moral authority and how it is created.

Authenticity

Much of it is created through the idea of an authentic, a true national community. Authenticity is a very important word in trying to understand the power of nationalism. This becomes possible once you create the idea of deep histories. If you look at most nationalisms, they are very new phenomena. The communities involved are themselves

quite new. These nationalisms, however, are written as very deep histories, which assert that these nations have always been united, have had a single origin (see Hobsbawm and Ranger 1992). This is what we call essentialization: they make certain traits the essence of a people. It is deep history that produces moral authority to say that you should do this or that for the unity of the nation.

Authenticity as the source of moral authority

What we call “regime of authenticity” is really a political force. Whoever gets to control what the authentic, true nation is can get people to do for them what they want. So it is very important who gets to be the custodian of this authenticity. Very often in the society there are different groups who compete for it. The most recent example of custodians of authenticity may be the Taliban in Afghanistan. The Taliban believe that modernization did not capture the authentic idea of Afghan Islamic authenticity. But you can see it in America, too, where the militia movements believe that true American values mean getting out of the United Nations and attacking the government, because the government has lost the essence of what America is.

The state as custodian of authenticity

So there can be different custodians of what is authentic. In the Chinese case, through the 20th century, the state has been able to assert itself as the keeper of the authentic, except during the Cultural Revolution.

Lomanov on who controlled authenticity during the Cultural Revolution

It is an open question whether the Cultural Revolution must be excluded, because if we see Mao Zedong as a real emperor in the Chinese view, we can see the rebellion as being against the bureaucracy with the support of a benevolent emperor, who was not able to confront that bureaucracy by himself. That's why it is very hard to say what exactly was the Cultural Revolution: complete rejection of Chinese nationalism or Chinese nationalism in a highly extreme form.

In the Cultural Revolution, although it was engineered by Mao Zedong, the Red Guards had a vision of what is true Chinese communism—true communism and Chineseness. And they believed that the state was not reflecting that idea. That was the cultural rhetoric of the Cultural Revolution.

The need to preserve symbols of authenticity

It is very important, especially for a state, to make sure that the control over authenticity does not become subject to market forces. In many countries, like Japan or Britain, the royalty has been a symbol of authenticity. In Japan the imperial formation is supposed to be eternal. It symbolizes the essential unity of the Japanese people. By contrast, the British royalty has become commodified, exposed to every scandal magazine to see who is having an affair with whom. Can it still be a symbol of authenticity?

Deterritorialized nationalism after 1980

The nation-state is still based on the territorial idea, but what is more important now is the ideology whereby you construct Chineseness. In the new ideology of nationalism, it is important to create a sense of Chineseness that can get investment capital and make the state more competitive in a global scheme. This is what I mean by the deterritorialization of nationalism: a different sense of community is being formed, one that is not restricted to the territorial area. The losers in this are peripheral people, people in the hinterland. This is why China's new policy to develop the western part of the country, the internal areas, is very important. It is an effort to make sure that this deterritorialization does not run away and divide the country.

Theories of weakening of the nation-state are misplaced

What is happening to the state in the course of this reterritorialization? There is a simple view that argues that with the new globalization, nationalism and the nation-state are weakening. I think that nationalism and the nation-state are changing, but not necessarily weakening. New institutional and regulatory forms are being created for interactions between subnational groups and groups from other nations.

Reterritorializing through new institutional forms of interaction between populations

The prefecture of Fukuoka in Japan, which was not doing too well economically, decided to create cross-national links with parts of China that have historically had some Japanese trade and influence, and some important cities like Dalian, which have had very strong Japanese influence earlier. Fukuoka now has its own government representatives in Dalian and in Shandong Province for the promotion of trade and interaction. This is a local-to-local kind of interaction. This means that the Yellow Sea region of China is developing as a kind of a trading area relatively autonomously.

The state's role can actually increase in recharting the relations between locality and center

But localities are not necessarily defying the national government. Very often, local-to-local arrangements involve a sharing of power. For example, the Fukuoka representative in Shandong will convince the local Shandong cadres to pressure Beijing in order to create an airport, or to pressure Beijing to pressure Tokyo to create an international airport in Fukuoka. In this way, sometimes there is competition between center and locality, sometimes there is arrangement and facilitation, and sometimes there is none.

Neglect of hinterland and irredentism on peripheries

But the effect of all this is, on the other hand, a neglect of the hinterland and irredentism. Precisely because territorial ideologies are weakening, for example, Turkic identity for Xinjiang Muslims becomes more important. Of course—as Gladney shows in

his chapter—there are a lot of internal contradictions there, too. But even in Inner Mongolia now Mongol nationalism is growing, exemplified by the cult of Genghis Khan. And there are interesting developments in the southwest, in the Yunnan area, with cross-border ties between ethnic Tai in China, Thailand, and Laos.

Edwards on cross-border Tais

The Dai speak a language akin to modern Thai, celebrate Thai festivals and share other traditions both with the Thai and with the Shan of Burma. In addition to these specific ethnic links, the Dai share Buddhist beliefs with the ethnic majorities of Burma, Laos, and Cambodia. But it is only during the last decade that Chinese authorities have actively advertised their existence to the region.

This cultural diplomacy began with a Dai-Thai encounter orchestrated in Xishuangbanna in China to cement Sino-Thai links in the early 1980s. Thousands of Thais now flock to Xishuangbanna annually to see their cultural roots. To the Thai tourist market, these tours are packaged as a means of reconnecting with an “authentic” Dai ancestry. The tourist sector in Yunnan has designed a number of attractions centering on ethnic minorities. A Dai nationality village was built on the banks of Dianchi Lake in Kunming in 1992 as the first ethnic enclave in the Haigeng Nationality and Cultural Village, a 580-hectare tourist complex scheduled to encompass 26 different ethnic minorities by 1995. Ethnic Dai from Ruili and Xishuangbanna reside in the artificial village, which incorporates Buddhist pagodas and bamboo houses and venues for tourists to sample Dai food, Dai music, and Dai dance.

In 1996, Zheng Xiaoyun, director of Yunnan’s Cultural Anthropology Institute, asserted that “the integration of tourism, trade and ethnic culture can help promote economic development in the Dai regions.” For Thailand, this cultural dialogue dovetails with government strategy to shift economic activity from Bangkok to the North and Northeast. In 1993, Thailand opened a consulate in Kunming. In 1994, China established a consulate in Songkhla. In 1996, Thailand invited official representatives from Yunnan, Laos, and Cambodia to Thailand for the Songkran (Water festival), which is celebrated by ethnic Thai in all four countries. A Thai Foreign Ministry working paper of 1996 stressed the potential of “common cultural practices” between ethnic Thai in diverse domains to promote “friendship and cooperation.”

These possibilities come from reterritorializing, where territorial boundaries are not that important any longer. Provinces that do not possess such cross-border possibilities, such as Guizhou and Shanxi, are also seeking to regain their status in the new deterritorialized nation.

The ideology of the deterritorialized nation

Since 1978, and especially since the mid-eighties, the Chinese government has shifted its discourse of the nation from a territorially oriented “peoples of China” (*Zhongguo ge minzu*) to a culturally or racially focused “Chinese people” (*Zhonghua minzu*) and to traditional culture and “values.” I think it was Arif Dirlik who said that the number of conferences on Confucianism in China is about hundred times higher than that of

conferences on Marxism. I was invited to a conference last year by the father of Chinese sociology, Fei Xiaotong—at least the invitation had his stamp on it—which was a conference at the Institute for the Children of the Yellow Emperor. I was quite shocked.

Commercialization and consumerism replaces the productionist ideal as driver of nationalism

Especially during the Maoist phase, the nationalist ideal was that the nation must produce more to be strong. Now, it seems the engine behind nationalism is consumerism. By consuming you become a stronger nation. That is a very important change, and an important role here is played by the media. The media is particularly important in the Chinese market, where it is the fourth or fifth largest industry. Since it is a socialist country, the media has many constraints, but nationalism is allowed to some extent.

Role of the media: commodification of sacred myths threaten the state's hold on authenticity

We come back to Benedict Anderson's idea of the imagined community pushed by print capitalism. Nationalism is one acceptable commodity in the Chinese media market. And once it becomes that, the sacred myths of the nation are no longer in the hands of the state alone. Take the myth of Mao. Mao is of course a real figure, but he represents something more than what his life was. He represents the cause of the revolution. From the early 1990s, there emerged a Mao cult, a plethora of various commodified representations of Mao, which Geremie Barmé (1996) has written about. As this became increasingly commercialized, more and more of Mao's life became exposed. Can his myth still be maintained? It may, at any rate, no longer have the same meaning.

Yoshino on the coproduction of nationalism by the state and the market

in "Introduction," in Kosaku Yoshino (ed.), *Consuming Ethnicity and Nationalism*.

Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1999; pp. 5–6.

(Zygmunt) Bauman ... writes that "as the interest of the state in culture faded (meaning that the relevance of culture to the reproduction of political power diminished), culture was coming within the orbit of another power," that is, the market. But does the market replace the state in forming nationalism? (...) The crucial question in this regard is: what are the intricate relationships between the state and various market-based agencies of cultural production and reproduction such as advertising agencies, travel agencies, the media and consultancy?

(...) While culture industries are still, in part, state-led, they increasingly work in and through mechanisms of the market, where the new middle classes are key players. Many theorists maintain that it is these sections of the population who seek the experience of cultural differences and novelty (...) As such, they are prominent producers, reproducers and consumers of ethnic, national and other identities in the marketplace.

The spread of these ideas happens through the market. Their effect becomes multiplied by the fact that the market can circulate them that much wider. Whether or not you get them in the classroom through state media, you also get them through market mechanisms. There is nothing new in that—Karl Deutsch (1961) says that media is what makes nationalism possible—but there is a particular connection between media and market in China today that intensifies it.

Nationalism becomes more intense and volatile

What does the school curriculum taught to students of different generations say about China?

and coming to America. During the bombing, there was a certain resistance to America, but after the bombing, almost immediately again, people went back to McDonald's.

Nationalism becomes so tuned in with market cycles, with the different opportunities of life in the market, it can come and go like that. How can we understand the relationship between market, globalization, and nationalism? There is greater anxiety in market societies than ever before, because you do not have as much sense of community and stability as you did earlier.

Is new nationalism controllable by the state? What is the role of globalization and diasporas?

All over the world, we see sudden outbursts of nationalism that then subside again. To mention one example, before the bombing of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade during NATO's bombing in 1999, people in China were going to McDonald's

This produces a greater need for consumption of the symbols of identity and authenticity. But the more commodified the symbols become, the more they lose their value—so there is greater anxiety and more need for symbols.

Chapter 3

Researching Chinese Nationalism: the Foreign Relations Dimension

DAOJIONG ZHA

Introduction

Nyíri on Zha's chapter

This chapter is the only one in this book written by a political scientist, and it bears the mark of the positivist, "rational choice," noncultural argumentation of that discipline. This discipline is, in fact, the most visible in discussions of Chinese nationalism and the one that, more than others, gets the ears of policy makers. The text gives a good overview of the "hot" topics in that discussion in political science and its various sub- and neighboring disciplines such as security studies, international relations, and political economy.

On the other hand, the text is like one by an anthropologist in the sense that it challenges all the statements commonly made by these disciplines as it introduces them, looking at them from the warp and from the weft. It goes through all the assumptions that are frequently rehearsed in policy documents but also challenges them. It does not say whether they are wrong or right, but it makes the reader ask some questions the next time he or she sees a statement like that.

At the outset, I should make it clear that this chapter is not intended to offer yet another version of nationalism in contemporary China's foreign relations. A search in an average college library's database can easily produce a list long enough to satisfy an interested reader's curiosity on this subject matter.

China's conduct in international affairs is a common feature in news coverage around the world. College courses on international relations almost invariably cover China and its pursuit of respect in the world. Now that China is more engaged in the process of economic globalization, public seminars are yet another source of information about China's international relations. Last but not least, Chinese have migrated to just about every corner of the world, bringing with them news from home as well as viewpoints that leave a direct personal impression about what the Chinese are like and, by extension, images of what those 1.3 billion Chinese may think about China and its relations with the outside world. In short, there is no shortage of opportunities for one to try to make sense of how China relates to the rest of the world. The abundance of information about China's foreign relations, on the other hand, presents a challenge.

What counts as admissible evidence?

To conduct research, you have to decide what constitutes admissible evidence. Personal experiences/stories matter, but at what level are they admissible as evidence? If you occupy your research with your personal impressions, aren't you missing something larger? This question is particularly relevant in thinking about China's foreign relations. The last thing you want to do is to have a model United Nations type of exercise where one represents China, you represent your home country, someone else represents a third country, and so on. Everybody delivers a speech in defense of his or her own positions, finds it difficult to publicly change his/her positions, and then walks away, mistakenly thinking that there has been an exchange of minds.

Critical thinking

The central message I hope to convey in this chapter is that there ought to be a willingness to question yourself. If a speaker or writer confirms what you already know about China, you are tempted to feel you have found the key to truth. When you hear or read something that doesn't fit with what is already on your mind, it is natural to have an emotional reaction: he/she is nationalistic, he/she puts me down or looks down upon my race/culture, etc. But such instincts get in the way of critical thinking. The most important thing in diplomatic negotiations, in journalistic reporting, or in other areas of cross-cultural activities is to take a step back from stereotypes.

Thus, there is no correct version of what Chinese nationalism is. Nobody is in a position to tell you. It is necessary to get different viewpoints, beginning with trying to sort out what analytical basis you yourself come from and how the messenger and the message may be (un)related. Behind the messenger/message there is a much larger world to explore. By so doing, you can begin building up something on your own. This is a critical element in scholarly research.

Duara on authenticity see pp. 18–19

Nyiri on the insider's and the outsider's view

You have to question whenever you encounter the claim that just because you are part of a society, you will therefore automatically say something different from an outsider. Especially in China you hear this very often: because you are a foreigner, no matter how you try, no matter how friendly you are, you will not be able to understand China. This idea of reserving the right to speak authentically and genuinely about a nation to its members is very central to nationalism. The purpose of this claim is for them to control the subject of the statement, to control you, the interlocutor.

In the following space, I try to deal with this subject by way of beginning with a general discussion about the conceptual dichotomies in international relations research on nationalism in general terms. Then, I address what I see as important questions in thinking about how Chinese nationalism manifests itself. These questions are:

- Where is China?
- Where does China belong?
- Signs of Chinese nationalism on the rise or acts in pursuit of China's national interest?
- Who speaks for China?
- What is "Chinese"?
- What is your purpose in researching Chinese nationalism?
- What about mastering the Chinese language?

Dichotomies in IR research on nationalism

International relations research (IR) faces a neverending dilemma between a demand for generalization across time and space and the necessity of empirical specificity. To generalize or theorize is to produce "general statements that describe and explain the causes and effects of classes of phenomena" (Evera 1997). In IR, more than in other subdisciplines of political science, the search for evidence to support a generalization often demands that one ventures into the unfamiliar territory where linguistic differences are probably the least of obstacles for communication. Yet an IR researcher is required to be able to emerge from that journey of inquiry with findings about the nature of a research object, often driven by the need to explain unpredicted events.

IR—an American social science

In IR, the research object—a civilization, nation-state, government, leader(s) and/or leadership, society, etc—being necessarily foreign, the framework(s) the researcher adopts is often as important as the evidence he/she gathers, if not more so. This is because IR is by and large comparative in nature, whether or not one makes it explicit in writing. The contours of that comparison, in turn, have to do with the purpose such study attempts to serve. In this regard, one of the most insightful critiques of the spread of IR research following the end of the Second World War is Stanley Hoffmann's identification of IR as an "American social science." The American tradition, which has sustained its influence worldwide, carries with it a number of weaknesses: focusing on the contemporary, from the perspective of a superpower, and a glide into a part of the policymaking apparatus (Hoffmann 1977).

Hoffmann's complaints, made in 1977, remain valid today. An entire generation of IR scholarship on Soviet nationalism (supposedly manifested in its communist and expansionist nature) failed to predict—as IR theorization posits to—the abrupt and complete ending of the Soviet Union as a unified governing entity in 1991. A more recent example is that the attacks on the World Trade Center in New York City were such a shock to the IR community that the International Studies Association issued a call to its three thousand members around the world for expertise in order to help make sense (and, as usual, policy recommendations) of the September 11, 2001 attacks. Prior to the attacks, research on Afghanistan as a nation/state fell squarely in the "area studies" category (i.e., less theoretical and less prestigious). The attack has not neces-

sarily elevated, so to speak, the status of Afghan studies in mainstream IR communities, but it most certainly drove home the need for more attention to the Afghan dimension of “Islamic fundamentalism,” a subject of diverse debates as well.

Nationalism

Nationalism as a key concept in IR research is supposed to be able to address challenges presented by sudden events like the September 11 attacks. This is so because the term is thought to offer sufficient insight into the ideological basis for a regime’s behavior in dealing with its external relations.

Although there is no general theory, there is a broad consensus in IR that nationalism both as a form of consciousness and as a political ideology has been the single most important factor shaping the structure and the processes of the modern world (Hoffmann 1977, Evans and Newnham 1998).

Understandably, the term “nationalism” is often prefixed with various modifiers in order to differentiate the scope of inquiry in one particular study from the broad, global phenomenon that the term tries to capture. Such prefixes can be references to a research object, one component of a country’s foreign policy, sponsors of projects to foster national consciousness, or seemingly apolitical projects that can be understood as part of a nationalistic agenda. Examples include “American nationalism,” “economic nationalism” of many countries, “state nationalism” and/or “popular nationalism,” and connections between sports and nationalism (Fousek 2000, Bairner 2001).

At one level, as is true in studies of “security,” arguably the most enduring concern in IR (Miller 2001), adding more prefixes does not necessarily lead to conceptual clarity. At another level, there are perhaps few other choices than going with more prefixes, both as a result of the context for research and in response to the demand for precision in elaboration.

When the prefix to “nationalism” is a reference to a state or a civilization, subjectivity easily sets in. This is true of not just the conceptual gaps in the debates over the so-called “Clash of Civilizations” (Huntington 1997) thesis (i.e., a purportedly Western civilization versus a Confucian civilization, which is understood to be in collaboration with an anti-Western Islamic civilization). Research rhetoric about nationalism within the same geographical area—Europe—also makes a distinction between “good” and “bad” nationalisms. More importantly, such tendencies are not restricted to discussions about Cold War politics; they take on a far more historical dimension.

Us vs. Them

In the voluminous literature on nationalism, especially that of a particular state/nation, a number of dichotomies shape the background for making sense of one another and of the dynamics in international interactions. The first dichotomy is the security-inspired “Us vs. Them” images. Identifying enmity or sources of threat is as natural to debates about a state’s security policymaking as it is to an individual’s making judgments about a neighbor’s possible intent and/or motives. Identifying an external source of threat can be conducive to shoring up internal cohesiveness, very much like members of a

family can find it easier to overcome differences among themselves if they are convinced to be faced with a belligerent neighbor.

But the same practice can also blindfold one, or the collective consciousness, from questioning whether or not a “clear and present danger” is indeed in existence. An illustrative example is the campaign in the United States to root out so-called Communist sympathizers within the American society itself during the early Cold War years. The campaign led to the social trauma known as McCarthyism, which began with the persecution of an entire generation of career diplomats with firsthand knowledge about China and the Soviet Union. More importantly, the campaign was translated into a drive to turn many American universities, the very institutions that were in a position to educate how “They” were truly different from “Us,” into little more than institutions capable of reaffirming societal fear of “Them” (Chomsky 1997).

Aggressive vs. benign nationalism

A second dichotomy is that given the impossibility for outsiders to halt the progression of nationalistic projects, research then focuses on identifying the implications of a particular nation/state’s nationalism: aggressive or benign. Aggressive nationalism calls for counteroffensive strategies or such preparations. Benign nationalism can be counted as part of a “nation-building” process, warranting perhaps watching with interest but not necessarily responsive strategies or actions. This dichotomy is particularly relevant for making sense of ongoing events. No matter how (a)historical a research project is, there does exist an imperative to define the nature of a major event somewhere in the world. Judgment about if or not that event is of concern beyond the borders of a country where the event takes place, in turn, derives from identification of the event’s nature, among other factors.

It should be noted here that an act of “aggressive nationalism” does not necessarily require aggression in a nation/state’s foreign policy. The scope of a country’s military buildup invites the obvious question: whom is the buildup meant to target? The same buildup, in contrast, can be self-explained as a legitimate and necessary measure for “self-defense,” although the potential enemy is often not clearly identified. In Asia, ideas of nationhood were imported from the West. Many Asian nations are continuing on their paths to build effective governance structures domestically. Still such measures are easily construed by other countries in the region and beyond as constituting an aggressive nationalism (Leifer 2000).

Nationalism vs. national interest

A third, closely related with the second, dichotomy is that between “nationalism” and “national interest.” Both terms are commonly used in political science/IR research. “Nationalism” denotes a level of undesirability since it reflects attempts to change the status quo, indicating movement into the unknown (Hall 1993). In contrast, pursuit of “national interest” is often accorded legitimacy and hence is not a subject of external concern.

Acts of nationalism can be undesirable in part because they can threaten the status

quo—often expressed as “order”—in regional and/or global political realities. Between the two lies a qualitative difference in a researcher’s assessment of a state’s foreign policy behavior. How that difference is handled at the foreign policy level can make the difference between quieting down an ongoing dispute and fueling its further explosion.

There can be more dichotomies to identify. What I have outlined thus far is meant to remind students of contemporary China to be mindful of the conceptual/philosophical points lurking in the background of just about every piece of research literature on China’s international relations. Concerns about Chinese nationalism are always existent, though only at times expressly stated. To arrive at an independent interpretation of contemporary Chinese foreign relations in general, however, one must be aware that research on Chinese nationalism is very much a process of identifying where China belongs in the international system at different stages in history. The following section outlines my understanding of debates in research conclusions about Chinese nationalism, with a particular focus on attempting to make sense of China’s international relations.

Questioning China

Where is China?

This question may seem silly at the first glance. Yet different answers to this question provide arguably the most important basis for debates about Chinese nationalism. This is because IR research takes the territorial boundaries of a country very seriously. When a government takes measures to defend its territory whose boundary is not subject to dispute, it is seen to be taking legitimate action. When a government refuses to compromise and settle a border dispute, it is seen as a display of nationalism. An indirect party to a border dispute sees a stake in it out of concern about disruption to the status quo in international politics. A good recent example is Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait in 1991 because the two had failed to agree on their border demarcation. Countries did not rush to defend Kuwait because their own border regions were under attack by Iraq. Rather, the principle of observing the integrity of a sovereign state’s boundaries as well as the goal of reaching peaceful solutions to border disputes were violated.

Border disputes with Russia

Contemporary China has had border disputes with virtually all its neighbors. China’s land border with the Soviet Union and its successor states were not legally demarcated until November 1997. To Valerii Osenev, “even a successful demarcation of the Russian–Chinese border will be insufficient to relieve various acute problems that have surfaced in recent years concerning Russia’s interests as a nation-state on its far eastern borders” (Osenev 1998). Sasha Lomanov’s chapter gives a good indication of those “acute problems,” particularly unregulated Chinese migration.

Border disputes with India

Another longstanding land border dispute China has is with India. The Himalayan Pass poses a formidable challenge for human migration either way. However, different interpretations over the value of a historical legacy of British colonialism (i.e., the so-called McMahon line) have prevented the two governments from reaching an agree-

ment about just where Chinese territory rightfully ends. The Sino-Indian border dispute not only resulted in a war in 1962 but also provides an important background for India to become a nuclear power. Another important dimension of India's rationale for going nuclear is the China-Pakistan relationship. Pakistan has competing claims for Kashmir with India, which accuses Pakistan of giving away part of the area to China.

Maritime boundaries

China's maritime territorial boundaries have been likewise subject to dispute. In the East China Sea, dispute over ownership of the islands known as Diaoyu in Chinese and Senkaku in Japanese present a classic case for the study of competing Chinese and Japanese nationalisms (Downs and Saunders 1998–99). China's disputes with five Southeast Asian states over the South China Sea have generated so much literature that it is virtually impossible to give a sampler of the different perspectives.

Taiwan and Tibet

On an everyday basis since the end of the Second World War, the single most important question about China's sovereign boundaries is whether or not Taiwan and its adjacent islands and Tibet are legitimate parts of China. For the past half century, dispute over the international political status of Taiwan has dominated the diplomatic agenda between Beijing and other political capitals around the world. Taiwan has now come to more forcefully claim an independent international identity of its own.

Tibet is under actual control by the Beijing government but its distinct culture as well as an active campaign led and symbolized by the Dalai Lama, a Tibetan religious leader, have kept alive the issue of whether or not China has the right to continue ruling Tibet. Over Taiwan and Tibet, the Beijing government has made its official positions known in the form of white papers. The very fact that the Beijing government continues pursuing its territorial claims is seen as a manifestation of Chinese nationalism using nationalism as an ideology for governance. A manifestation of Chinese nationalism means that because, among other factors, contemporary China has had difficulties in identifying itself in world politics, it chooses to keep Taiwan and Tibet as issues of contention in its foreign relations (Dittmer and Kim 1993). Chinese nationalism as an ideology for governance means that since the government of China has had difficulties in effectively governing the land that is under its actual control, continuing to remind its populace of the historical injustice done to China by foreign countries serves the purpose of shoring up domestic unity. In either case, using Chinese nationalism as a framework for making sense of China's foreign relations in relation to Taiwan, Tibet, and other territorial disputes leads one to recognize that there is a construction of "Us" (China, the Chinese people, and Chinese civilization) versus "Them" (foreign countries, Taiwan and Tibet independence advocates as well as their foreign supporters) by the Chinese government.

Where does China belong?

Over the years, the academic and international political significance in answering the question "where is China" has gone beyond debates about China's territorial scope and rights. When we refer to China as an Asian country, we are recognizing China's

cultural and economic ties with the other countries in Asia. The historical legacy of Chinese dynasties in a tributary trade relationship with its neighbors often conjures up memories and images of domination by China. At the level of culture, it is commonsensical to note that traditional Chinese culture has left a lasting and tangible impact on Asian societies: Japan, Korea, and Vietnam in particular. Chinese communities throughout Southeast Asia, in particular, invoke mixed feelings about how they can affect relations between Southeast Asian states and China (Wang 2001).

Neither democratic nor traditionally Communist

The trajectory of political change in contemporary China (since 1949) certainly makes China a nonmember of the world of democracy. Yet China is not a Communist country in the traditional sense of the term, either. One recent survey identifies seventeen “contenders for taxonomic hegemony” in attempting to categorize change in China since the end of Mao-era (Baum and Shevchenko 1999). The very fact that China is not a democracy has a significant impact on the acceptability of Chinese foreign policy practices in dealing with political issues (not least in its policies over the international political status of Taiwan, which has transformed itself into a democracy since the late 1980s). China’s path to economic growth does not offer much help for addressing the question of where China belongs in the world, either. Unlike other “transition economies,” China did not choose privatization of property rights as a key strategy (Nolan and Wang 1999). Constitutional right to private property ownership, among other things, separates China from the Newly Industrializing Economies (NIEs) in Asia. The NIEs are thought to offer a lesson for other less developed countries around the world. The trajectory of economic reform that most closely resembles China’s is that of Vietnam. In other words, China stands as a model that can be applicable to its own land.

Answers to questions about China’s place in the conceptual division of the world matter because they inform comparison and contrast about China with the rest of the world. When similarities cannot be easily identified across space lines, comparison has to be based on historical patterns. In this regard, China’s own histories are found to be more relevant. This further solidifies the notion that China is different. In a word, researchers’ conceptualization of China’s place in the world serves as a strong impetus for analyzing Chinese nationalism: to see how it is different from other nation-states and societies.

Questioning nationalism

Chinese nationalism on the rise or China in pursuit of its national interest?

Answers to questions about China’s territorial scope and its place in world politics have a direct impact on assessing significant developments in China’s relations with the rest of the world. To categorize a particular Chinese foreign policy behavior as “nationalistic” is to imply that there is something abnormal and undesirable to the parties on the receiving end. To see the same behavior as part of a pursuit of China’s national interest, in contrast, implies acceptance of normalcy.

China's position during the Kosovo war

Let us use China's foreign policy during the 1999 war on Yugoslavia as an example. China did not support the United States and European members of NATO when they made the decision to launch military strikes on Yugoslavia. Behind debates about legitimacy of the war was a clash in seeing whether or not state sovereignty still remained supreme in international politics, since what Yugoslavia did was well within its state boundaries. China was on the side of the sovereignty argument and by extension a sympathizer with the Yugoslav regime, which was facing overwhelming military power. The huge gap between American and Chinese military power is part of the background for relations between the United States and China since the end of the Second World War. For China to offer sympathy to Yugoslavia, of course, was an act of nationalism—through presentation of identity with the weaker side in international conflicts.

In May, the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade was “mistakenly” bombed by the United States. There were angry protests in Beijing and other major cities in China. Demonstrators threw stones at and damaged the American Embassy in Beijing. At one level, “national interest”—in protecting the property of an embassy and the lives of embassy staffers—was at stake first for China and later for the United States. At another level, questions can be asked about whether or not the fates of these two embassies represent something larger, i.e., a pattern of nationalism in either the United States or China, or both. One comment on the embassy incidents sees it necessary to ask the following questions:

What are the ultimate goals of China's nationalists? Do they want to integrate China into the extant world system? Or do they seek to construct a separate, China-centered Asian order from which to eventually challenge the West? In short, is there a “China Threat” (Gries 1999)?

What we see here is a perfect illustration of beginning and ending with the question of whether or not a noticeable development constitutes a pattern of change. More importantly, identifying that pattern is firmly rooted in this simple yet prevalent demand for making a choice (either you are with us or against us) in everyday international politics.

Who speaks for China?

Research on Chinese nationalism has to make reference to “Chinese perspectives.” For a number of reasons, this is a particularly challenging question. Scholars specializing on political and social change in China have long been troubled by the problem of identifying the credible representations of Chinese (government's) points of view.

From the 1950s to the early 1970s, few Western scholars or journalists had direct access to Mainland China. Taipei, Hong Kong, and Tokyo became the operational bases for the purpose of “China watching.” When China did open itself up for direct observation, the challenge for studying China only grew stronger. Now that academics, government officials (many of whom were China specialists before joining the government), businessmen and tourists, and journalists all write about the China, they are able to see with their own eyes. The explosion of research findings invites criticism and self-criticism (for example Shambaugh 1993).

Differentiating and analyzing discourses

The study of China's foreign relations is made more perplexing due, in a large part, to the lack of transparency in debates within the Chinese government. Official positions the Chinese government presents offer some clue. But since so much of the official rhetoric is meant for China's domestic audience, the researcher finds it necessary but difficult to differentiate between rhetoric and substance. There is also room for suspicion to give value to interviews with Chinese government officials, due to a lack of access to the internal process of foreign policy decision-making. Nevertheless, movement from having to rely on translations of publications and articulations coming out of China to being able to conduct direct observations inside has greatly enriched our understanding of the making of Chinese foreign policy, in spite of the continuing challenge for theorizing Chinese foreign policy (Hughes 1997).

When Chinese writers, either academics or journalists, do dissent from their government in expressing opinions about China and China's international relations, such dissenting views are taken rather seriously. An excellent case in point is the sensational book *China Can Say No*, published in 1996. The book immediately drew international media attention and became a topic for scholarly debates about its value.

The editors of China Can Say No about the book

Zhang Xiaobo and Song Qiang, "China Can Say No to America" in *New Perspectives Quarterly*, vol. 13, no. 4, p. 55 (Fall, 1996). Reproduced unchanged.

BEIJING—A generation of Chinese has totally and uncritically absorbed Western, particularly American, values. Lately, however, the tide has begun to turn. More and more people in China are looking East instead of West to find a future. Because of the growth of the Chinese economy and the legacy of China's rich cultural traditions, many of us maintain that China should aspire to take its place as a world power instead of lamely emulating Western society as, for example, Japan has.

The bold expression of this point of view in our book *China Can Say No* has drawn sneers from Western observers as well as China's own established "intellectuals," such as Su Xiaokang, whose consistent putdown of China comes from looking East through Western eyes. But those who sneer have not been able to propose any way of their own for China to become democratic and more prosperous that does not compromise our national dignity. Those who criticize the fact that "America bashing" has become fashionable in China ignore the fact that "China bashing" has always been fashionable in America.

In fact, Chinese intellectuals are now in the process of seriously examining and rejecting the pro-Western views of the older generation, particularly those in exile, such as the physicist Fang Li Zhi or the journalist Liu Binyan. They have long lost touch with realities in China and can never again be an inspiration to Chinese youth. Nor will they have a part to play in future changes in China.

In writing down such views in our book—which includes chapters titled "We Don't Want MFN"* and "I Won't Get on a Boeing 777"—we and the other contributors are not "confessing our sins" about once being attracted to the ways of the West. We are only

* Most Favored Nation status granted by the US Congress, which entails trade privileges (eds.).

pointing out a dangerous fact: The sense of loss and resentment at this overwhelming Western influence in the Third World is a breeding ground for a growing, anti-Western post-colonialism. As a consequence, saying no to America will become more and more common in the world, particularly in Asia.

Our book openly condemns Japan for, in essence, defecting from Asia. We argue that Japan should not be a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council and suggest, sarcastically, that the UN may as well give two seats to the United States instead. Further, our book makes the case that China has the right to claim damages from Japan for its invasion and occupation of China and exposes, for the first time, the resentment of Chinese students over former Communist Party General Secretary Hu Yaobang's over-optimistic invitation to 3,000 Japanese youth to visit China. Critics of *China Can Say No* have noted that we make no secret of our appreciation of Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, the Russian nationalist. But our view is that if we can permit an open airing of views by national black sheep such as Su Zaozhi, who has said "if only I could change my blood," then we should also allow those who think like Zhirinovskiy in our country.

After all, the emergence of differing views in the debate is just a reflection of our future democratic political situation. Examining the state of US-China relations, we are pessimistic about the future. The younger generation China can't stand America's disingenuous preachiness on human rights (haven't we all seen the video of Rodney King or of the immigrant workers being mercilessly beaten by police in Riverside, California?) or its irresponsible threats on trade sanctions and Taiwan. In turn, we take a critical look at the weak and vague stance of China in international relations, calling on the Chinese authorities never to give an inch to the "Anti-China Club" which exists in America. China should be more like Cuba, which has admirably stood up against America.

No doubt our views on Taiwan will worry the Americans and some people in Taiwan because we encourage Chinese youth to prepare to solve the Taiwan issue by force. The theory that the people of Taiwan have the right to determine their own political future is "absurd." This is not meant to be a provocation, only a reaction to the arrogance of the American Congress who thinks it is their vocation to "protect" Taiwan.

There should be no illusion that relations will be qualitatively improved by visits from high-level American officials such as Anthony Lake, the US National Security Adviser. Barring revolutionary change in American foreign policy, the confrontation between China and America will be a protracted one.

Though the neo-isolationist strain apparent in American thinking may eventually be self-defeating for the US, we believe it could nonetheless also be constructive in dampening America's indulgent self-exaltation. Certainly, the commercial greed and impotence before terror revealed during the Olympics in Atlanta should shake America from its illusion of being the sole world leader from here to eternity. This is especially noteworthy because the "Anti-China Club" in the US vetoed Beijing's chance to host the Summer Olympic Games for the year 2000 in that city because "we couldn't handle it." At the end of the 20th century, China has once again become a world power in its own right. It need not play second fiddle to anyone. The next generation coming to power in China is prepared to say no and won't hesitate to do so when it is in our interests.

Zhang Xiaobo and Song Qiang are the editors of, as well as contributors with four other young Chinese writers to bestseller, "China Can Say No—Political and Emotional Choices in the Post Cold War Era" (May 1996). The book is consciously modeled after the famous 1991 tract by the Japanese nationalist Shintaro Ishihara, "A Japan That Can Say No."

The book was written by three Chinese freelance journalists who had no direct input into China's foreign policy making process. Yet it was so uncharacteristic of the usual Chinese rhetoric that it confirmed an instinct long on the minds of China scholars: the Chinese had good reasons, both historical and contemporary, to hate the foreigners (especially governments of the major powers) for inflicting wounds on China's search for glory. Furthermore, the Chinese government was thought to be responsible for having either monopolized its propaganda machine to drum up so much anti-Western sentiment among its youth or suppressed freedom of expression to face the consequence of a backlash more aimed at the government than at the foreigners. Years later, the book and the debate it generated within China remain subject for further inquiry (Forges and Xu 2001). But it is clear that Chinese government policy has not followed the policy prescriptions the book laid out.

Questioning the speaker and yourself

To make a decision on who speaks for China can be tricky. On the one hand, there is the problem of deciding what role your writer and/or interviewee plays in China's foreign policy making process and what intentions that person may hope to achieve. On the other hand, there is the need to resist the urge to challenge your writer/interviewee to make a choice (though often unspoken): are you with us or against us? Furthermore, how this "Us" is defined also matters to what you eventually decide to take as indicators of the larger phenomenon you want to describe.

An illustrative example is a *New York Times* article (Rosenthal 2002). Written against the background of U.S. President Bush's visit to Beijing in February 2002, a journalist tries to address the meaning of being a Chinese by drawing links between popularity of Western brand products among ordinary Chinese consumers and the distance Chinese leaders try to paint between the two countries.

Granted, even in democratic societies, individuals and their governments will for sure have different opinions about how their society/country ought to associate with another society/country. China is no exception. But it can be a fallacy to draw a connection between Chinese consumers' purchase of Western brand products and their political inclinations. Chinese food, for example, is popular in many cities around the world. But, obviously, it would be too far-fetched to draw a connection between eating Chinese food and supporting the Chinese government's political behaviors and/or projects.

What is 'Chinese'?

Another question that informs much of the research on nationalism in China's foreign relations has to do with the object the very word "Chinese" refers to. When we take "China" to simply refer to a governing unit, the issue is fairly simple: it has an official name, a capital city, and a bureaucracy to implement its policies, among other features of a governing body. The research problem arises when we try to make sense of what is done in the name of China the country.

Historical context

In foreign policy studies it is necessary to make sense of a particular policy act by situating it in a historical context. What we refer to in the English language as Chinese civilization has a very long history. “Modern China”—beginning with the formal ending of the **Qing Dynasty** in 1911—is only a very short period in the long evolution of that civilization. Various political movements that have been taking place since all claim to be in the interest of advancing the Chinese civilization. Just what constitutes “Chinese,” however, is a contentious issue for both the champions of those movements and for other countries/civilizations affected by what goes on in China (Wang 1991). Since the People’s Republic of China was established in 1949, academic debates about how Chinese—in a civilizational sense—its foreign as well as domestic policies are have never ended.

Ethnic nationalism

A second dimension to this question is related to assessing just which ethnic group(s) making up the totality of the population in China does the government of China’s policies aim to protect in the name of “Chinese civilization.” In this regard, what anthropologists call the production of “ethnic nationalism” in China is directly related to debates about “self-determination” in international politics and international law. Indeed, a large part of contemporary, even modern China’s foreign policy problems has to do with the promotion of ethnic Han Chinese nationalism at the expense of equal treatment of ethnic minorities inhabiting vast areas of China’s frontiers (see Gladney’s chapter).

“The party” or “the people”?

Still a third dimension has to do with the process of selecting a government in contemporary China. The People’s Republic of China was established on the basis of armed struggles. It has not instituted or committed itself to move in the direction of representative democracy. Therefore, when we come across references to “Chinese interests,” there is the question of whether it means interests of maintaining the governing apparatus or those of the people (here again, bear in mind the ethnic diversity issue mentioned in the previous paragraph).

Nyíri on agency

When you speak about a group you always have to be specific about who are the people who are acting. If you say that the Chinese in Hungary are nationalistic, you have to be specific about who are the ones who make nationalistic statements in one situation, and who are the ones who simply overtake those statements and reproduce them, and who are the ones who suffer from these statements.

In short, coming to grips with the level of reference in a particular claim of “Chinese nationalism” or “Chinese national interest”—either in official explanations or in

research conclusions—is of great importance. Among other things, such an understanding is required for identifying the philosophical benchmark that informs analysis of various claims and counterclaims.

What is your purpose in researching Chinese nationalism?

This is a standard question that applies to any research effort. The very topic of China, its foreign policy in particular, comes with controversies at all levels of reference. Therefore, one needs to make a decision about whose action and in what area one would like to see change. Indeed, IR, as a part of political science, is a study of change: how and why change has taken place? In what directions would future change likely evolve? Which of those directions is desirable and/or possible?

In this connection, the identification of an American “missionary complex” in dealing with China (in a civilizational sense) serves as a good reminder. Such missions include: to modernize China through commerce; to convert China to Christianity; to mold China’s universities and research institutions in the American tradition; to impart American values in the Chinese populace through promotion of American pop culture; and finally, to affect China’s behavior in world politics (Shambaugh 1997). The relevance of such insights about American interests and policy goals in dealing with China for research about Chinese nationalism is that you, the researcher, ought to be clear about your own purpose in taking on the subject matter. Is it an academic exercise, speaking to an audience that is less involved in the daily making of foreign policy towards China? Or, if it is going to be a policy-oriented project, what can be the possible consequences of your identification and analysis of, as well as policy recommendations in response to a demonstration of nationalism in Chinese foreign policy? In each of these and other possible choices, what do you hope to accomplish? Your awareness of these issues will be critical for you to decide on the evidence you select, the framework for analysis, and your presentation of conclusions and recommendations.

What about mastering the Chinese language?

The answer to this question is obvious. To master the Chinese language in the course of researching China is definitely helpful and, as many college programs insist, necessary. It is important to be aware that language itself is very political: there are particular philosophical values and prejudices language producers want to impart on its learner. This in no way implies that studying China and Chinese nationalism is so formidable a challenge that it is beyond reach. Quite the contrary, now that access to language learning opportunities in the main Chinese speaking societies (China, Taiwan, Singapore) is free from political/diplomatic constraints, one has the benefit of comparing how the subject of “China” is being treated in all of them. Indeed, it is ideal for one to experience studying and living in all those societies when possible. Even if one cannot afford studying Chinese in more than one Chinese speaking society, it is desirable to try to learn about the historical evolution of key notions about China and its foreign relations as expressed in Chinese language texts. Additionally, mastering the Chinese language can be of great help in differentiating between official and unoffi-

cial texts/ voices. Doing so can help avoid mistaking the contemporary for the historical, mixing official with private opinions, among other possible areas of error.

My point here is that, as is true in studying any country or civilization, learning its language is no replacement for critical thinking. Instead, with this awareness, a student of China and Chinese nationalism can sharpen his spirit of inquiry through learning the Chinese language and making good use of research materials produced in it.

Concluding remarks

I have tried to touch on some conceptual as well as pragmatic aspects in studying Chinese nationalism as manifested in its foreign relations. It is a large subject that has attracted the attention of generations of scholars around the world. It is also an important subject, thanks to, if nothing else, the large size of the population that inhabits the land known as China, no matter how its geographical boundaries are drawn. As such, it requires devoted efforts to produce new research on Chinese nationalism that can shed deeper insights than what is available.

I hope the message you get from my chapter is a willingness to question yourself. Many times it is very agitating. You hear something that doesn't fit with what you already know. You have this emotional reaction. This speaker is stupid, or this speaker is nationalistic, this speaker puts me down, this speaker looks down upon my race. Get away from that. Be cool. The most important thing in diplomatic negotiation, in journalistic recording, or in cross-cultural exchange is that you try to take a step back from stereotypes. The first point is that you build in yourself a willingness to question yourself. Never take the second step. People usually take that second step. Don't tolerate it.

Chapter 4

On the Periphery of the “Clash of Civilizations?” Discourse and Geopolitics in Russo-Chinese Relations

ALEXANDER V. LOMANOV

Images of each other

Chinese people I meet love to ask whether Russians think that China is a threat. The answers will depend a lot on how you formulate your question. A polling company called monitoring.ru asked 1,600 respondents in over 100 cities all over Russia in May 2000 whether they thought there was a country in the world today that represented a threat to Russia. 27% of respondents named the United States. In February 2001, this grew to 34%. China trailed the US in this poll with only 3% of the answers in May 2000 and 5% in February 2001. And the most amazing is that the third country was Japan. In May 2000 1% said that Japan constituted a threat to Russia, and in February 2001 it was already 3%. In other words, the increase in people who perceive Japan as a threat was the steepest.

But responses could be absolutely different if you ask: Is China a potential threat to Russia? In case people are asked “Is China dangerous now?,” only 5% will say, yes. But if you ask “Will China be dangerous?,” it is more about your fears, about your interpretation of what you learn from history textbooks, the media, your own memories, and public discourses. There are polls in which you get a “yes” answer from more than one person in two, especially in the Far Eastern regions.

This means that people do not think of the current People’s Republic of China as a threat to Russian security, but they think that somehow the would-be China could threaten Russia. That’s why mutual stereotypes between Russia and China are full of cynicism or ambiguity. Russian newspapers’ reporting on the visit of President Jiang Zemin to Moscow in 2001 had a huge amount of it. Very few newspapers, except those close to the Communists and close to the government, reported the official story of friendship and cooperation. Almost all independent newspapers took a critical and skeptical view.

Reasons for mistrust

Why are they so skeptical? Why do they think that this friendship could not be long-lived? Why did so many journalists say that the Russo-Chinese treaty was empty, good words without any substantiation, or good words that would not change the evil intentions of China or the imbalance of power (that is, China is strong and it will be stronger, and Russia is weak and it will remain weak, and the gap will only increase)?

"Never trust the Communists"

One possible explanation is a political one. Soviet people have lived through the Communist system, and there is widespread skepticism of it. They say: It is not because Chinese civilization is bad, not because Chinese culture is bad or Chinese are evil people that we should be skeptical, but because Communist parties are vicious. The Chinese Communists would go into an alliance with Russia and later destroy their former allies. That's why we cannot trust China as long as the Communist Party is in power: because the practice of Communism is the practice of cheating your partner in order to gain more benefits.

"Cooperation is unprofitable for Russia"

The second reason why China–Russia relations are flawed is that there is a gap between words and deeds. There are solemn declarations of friendship, but the deeds are a quite minuscule amount of trade between two countries. Many Russian analysts say: What's the use to talk about our friendship and good-neighborly relations? Washington and Beijing never say such things but they have more than \$60 billion of mutual trade per year. We say a lot of words and we can hardly produce \$8 billion per year. Besides, China, like the West, needs raw materials from Russia, but unlike from the West, what we get from China is not hard currency or high-tech but low-quality consumer goods. If we disregard military exports, Russian exports of civilian machinery and vehicles continue to decline.

"Russia is threatened by Chinese immigration"

The analysts say: You can be friends with Beijing, but that doesn't mean that you can be friendly with those Chinese people who are coming to Russia. Those illegal immigrants will come in greater and greater numbers, so no treaties will protect you from the Yellow Peril. You can have a treaty, but in ten or twenty years the Far East and Siberia will be flooded with Chinese, and we should prepare ourselves to say goodbye to Russian culture and civilization in these areas.

"The Chinese look down upon Russian culture from a position of Sino-Communist chauvinism"

The fourth problem is what is perceived by some circles in Russia as Chinese disrespect towards Russian culture. I think it is more a kind of misunderstanding produced by the very complicated history of the 20th century. In the 1950s, although there could be different assessments of that, there was a common ideological discourse that brought Chinese and Russians together. As a result, the Chinese learned a lot about Soviet culture, about icons like the heroes of the Second World War, Zoya and Shura Kosmodemianskii—a brother and sister who sacrificed their lives during the war—or Pavel Korchagin from Ostrovsky's novel *How the Steel was Tempered*. In the 1990s, a movie was produced based on this novel by a Chinese producer and broadcasted in China. Zoya and Shura are symbols of patriotism, of sacrificing your life for your land. *How the Steel was Tempered* is more about giving your life for the Party, like an early Soviet version of **Lei Feng**.

What is perceived as Chinese disregard to Russian culture is the result of a break with Soviet culture in Russia. Soviet things are almost discarded, and there is a search

for the cultural roots of Russian civilization and tradition; and the Chinese are absolutely unfamiliar with that tradition. There are no channels of transmission of that tradition into China. So there is a complete feeling of cultural miscommunication. As a graduate student in China you still know the Soviet icons, but persons of your age in Russia will not be able to say much about them. And those who are just five years younger haven't heard anything about Korchagin, Zoya, and Shura. What used to be common cultural symbols are no longer that.

"The Chinese consider the current border with Russia 'unjust' and secretly want to grab our lands, and there is nothing any treaty can do about that"

The Chinese say that we will respect the border, but you Russians must publicly confess that you obtained this land through bad means. But people suspect that China's next step would be: OK, you have recognized that you got this land by bad means, so now it is time to return it. Chinese have been eager to receive Russian confessions of "mistakes" committed by the Russian tsars in the past, and Russians have absolutely refused to deliver them.

"They are arming themselves and can become a military threat to Russia"

The last problem is the growing militarization of China. It is nothing compared with Japan or the USA. But in 2001, the Chinese military budget exceeded the Russian military budget by at least \$4–5 billion. Of course, one billion dollars of this money are pouring into Russian pockets every year, because the Chinese use it to buy Russian weapons. But still, it is an unpleasant game of figures. We used to be Big Brother and Little Brother, but now Little Brother's military expenses are bigger than ours.

Many people say it is no problem. China has no interest, no motivation and no resources to attack Russia. But just as the Chinese say: why don't we like Americans? Why are we suspicious about them? Because their military budget is ten times higher than ours. So we are suspicious that they will overrun us. By a similar logic, although the difference between Russia's and China's military budgets is still no more than 10–15%, the gap is growing and the Russians are beginning to ask questions.

How the image of China has formed in Russia

Early Russian understanding of China was more or less coherent with Western Enlightenment interpretations: the "Chinese way" was to be stagnant, inefficient, corrupted. Later, these characteristics were applied to the West as well.

In the 19th century, Russian intellectuals were divided between two main groups, the Slavophiles and the Westernizers. The former advocated a Russian indigenous way of civilization and development, while the latter advocated closer relations between Russia and the Western civilization. But even Westernizers stressed the unique values of Russia. They argued that Russia must save the West from Sinification, from becoming Chinese. Did they mean the Chinese occupation of the West? No. They meant that the Western apostasy, the Western split from genuine Byzantine Christianity had produced the same loss of spiritual values as in China. Moscow was the culture that kept the only genuine form of Christianity as an uninterrupted tradition. So all those people

who don't have it must have something in common. That's why we have materialistic China, and we see that people in the West are getting more and more materialistic and less and less spiritual. That's why we should spread our spiritual values both to the West and to the East. It was a sort of messianic self-understanding: we are unique and we could contribute both to the West and to the East.

Later it was also discussed by the famous religious philosopher **Vladimir Soloviev**, who predicted even physical occupation of Europe by Sino-Japanese troops. It was a completely millenarian vision. First you would be occupied by a Sino-Japanese army, and later somebody would come and claim to be a Messiah to save the world, but of course it would be an Antichrist. Later, the Antichrist would be overthrown by the true believers.

These were the cultural, religious concepts of the late 19th century. They still live on somewhere within the matrix of Russian culture, but as articulated concepts they have been completely forgotten. But now, in the intellectual circles in Moscow and St. Petersburg, these old predictions by Soloviev and others have been rediscovered. People say: Look, we are scared of the Chinese migrants here—and this is not our bias. Already in the 19th century—they say—the best brains of Russia were scared of the Chinese invasion, of the chances that Chinese settlers would sooner or later retake the land masses of Siberia and the Russian Far East, and change the Russian way of life and civilization. How modern their theories are!

So the current political and economical problems have been reinforced by discourses of the 19th century. Meanwhile, however, the image of China has changed from that of a passive and inefficient mass prone to apathy to that of a dynamic people capable of influencing the fates of neighboring countries.

“Atlantism” versus “Eurasianism” in current Russian debates

Those in Russia who are more or less sympathetic to a civilizational and political alliance between Russia and the West are sometimes called Atlanticists. And those who are in favor of China or emphasize the Eastern element of Russia are dubbed Eurasianists.

Let me describe two examples of extreme Atlanticist discourse. One example is Professor Utkin, who says Russians are Europeans who are not being allowed into Europe.

For Professor Utkin—a Deputy Director of the Institute of the US and Canada of the Russian Academy of Sciences—an alliance with China is a means to open the doors of Europe. Europe is now satisfied with the current situation, and Russia is forgotten. You have a complicated, humiliating process applying for a visa, and no investments. To get accepted into Europe, we need to improve our legal system and create order inside the country, but we must also make Europe worried about China. We must scare Europe with the phantom of a Sino-Russian alliance. I quote him: “A coordination at the general level [between Russia and China] would be sufficient for the currently inaccessible Euro-Atlantic world to feel the tectonic shift” in the global balance of power. This is an interesting sort of nationalistic discourse. And the final statement

by Professor Utkin was a funny one: The Russian military-industrial complex sells only a fraction of its products to China. It should sell all our military technique and designs—then Europe will see how big a mistake it made by leaving Russia outside Europe (Utkin 1999).

Other versions of the Atlantic nationalist discourse are also based on the idea of Russia as the bastion of Europe. The Yellow Peril is reappearing. No one will save the West but Russia. But we need Western help to reinforce us economically and civilizationally in order to be a good frontier against Chinese expansion. This is a modern version of the historical myth of Russia as the protector of Christianity from the Mongol conquest. Economist Vladimir Gilbo, head of a small think tank in St. Petersburg, proposes that Russia should apply to join NATO immediately and offer to establish an extraterritorial East-West transport corridor in Russia to protect NATO forces. Professor Gilbo's idea of a Chinese expansion starts straight from 300 million: not several thousands, several hundreds of thousands, or several millions. He says that it is quite easy for the Chinese to plant 300 million people into Russia. It is only one-fifth of the Chinese population. Let's imagine we did not invite NATO troops and there are 300 millions of Chinese in Russia and only 120 millions of us. Then Russians will be teased as "big-eyes," idiots unable to speak human—i.e., Chinese—language, and relegated to the status of a docile work force to produce timber and oil for China. Of course, the figures cited by Professor Gilbo are absolutely fantastic—but that is the only way to make things believable (Gilbo 1999).

Gilbo's theory is so extreme that it has no representative value. But its extremeness gives an idea of the scope of Russian uneasiness about the way into the future. At least, you can say that about some intellectuals in the metropolitan cities of Moscow and St. Petersburg who are still trying to invent a framework of "the Russian national idea" out of the blue. Many people in Russian political and intellectual circles are seriously worried that the "strategic partnership," this alliance or quasi-alliance with China that is going on now, will be an obstacle to Russia's Westernization or movement into Europe. So Zbigniew Brzezinski's book *The Grand Chessboard. American Primacy and Its Geostrategic Imperatives*, in which he argues that the struggle for world hegemony will be decided in Eurasia, set off an alarm among Russian political scientists (Brzezinski 1997).

Should we try to get integrated into Europe? Or should we keep an intermediate position somewhere between the West and Asia without being integrated into either system? This very old controversy is still alive in Russia.

The theory intended to transcend this controversy is the so-called Eurasianism. This theory has its rational core: the desire that the 19th-century dispute between Slavophiles and Westernizers should be closed. Some moderate Eurasianists in contemporary Russia say we should find a middle ground. Russia should be a bridge between the two civilizations, East and the West, but without being affiliated to either of these two systems. The influential head of the Institute for Far Eastern Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Mikhail Titarenko, is one of the proponents of "neo-Eurasianism." He writes:

...the Eurasian character of Russian civilization opens the possibility of new intercivilizational and international relations founded on the principles of co-develop-

ment and mutual influence, allowing to solve the problems of ... preserving civilization diversity. In the new geopolitical situation in which Russia finds itself today, the concept of neo-Eurasianism that removes the extremes of both Slavophilism and Westernism can correspond to the interests of the country's consolidation and to overcoming local nationalism and interethnic conflict as well as separatist tendencies (Titarenko 1996).

It is a very good program, this idea of Russian neutralism. Who knows, those young girls and boys in Vladivostok who are learning Chinese, who are dynamic and able to interact with this new civilization, might produce a new Russo-Chinese or Russo-Eurasian paradigm. The problem is that, unlike cultural interaction with the West, interaction with China has no roots in the past. People are scared by this paradigm, afraid of being completely assimilated by the Chinese, which would be no Eurasianism but the Sinification of Russia.

The role of China in defining Russia's identity

Both Russia and China have developed through history as *system-states*, i.e., states with exclusive, universalistic ideologies. In the Russian case, this was based upon the Orthodox tradition, upon the uniqueness of Russia's place in Europe or Eurasia; quite a Messianic role. In the case of China, it was based upon the Sinocentric notion of *tianxia* or "all under Heaven," where the non-Chinese periphery is inhabited by barbarians. When these two systemic states met each other, one—Russia—was strong, the other was weak. But now, both China and Russia are rediscovering their nationalistic discourses. In the Russian case this is a post-Communist discourse, in China, it is a still-Communist or quasi-Communist nationalistic discourse, because it is still done within the previous ideology. In the Russian case it is more like a negation of the negation of Russian culture that took place in the Soviet Union.

How will these two newly emerged nationalist ideologies, both of which are developing themselves through proving their uniqueness, interact? The ideology of Russian nationalism is mainly to find a uniquely Russian route. In the case of China it is also an attempt to find a uniquely Chinese model in economy and politics. As long as those two discourses are not militant, as long as they are tolerant and concentrate on the problems of the country itself, they couldn't be dangerous. But if and when these discourses take the form of rebuilding their empires—of course they could be dangerous.

The encounter between Russia and China is unique because both are former superpowers that have lost out in the contemporary world. They are *beyond* the so-called new world order. They have no place in the world-system that would satisfy their appetite for dignity and respect. To a certain extent, the effect of the 1990s in Russia, the decline and disintegration of the country and the impression that it is being abandoned by the West, is comparable with the effect of the Opium War upon the Chinese national psyche. Before there had been a huge Soviet Union and a sense of security, of greatness, maybe of a certain superiority. Now your country has disintegrated, it is much smaller, you have no friends, no respect, you are poor, nobody wants to talk with you, nobody wants to treat you as an equal, so what should you do? Should you

fire a couple of missiles? Or should you find some investment? Or should you send more oil? Or should you say "no" to everybody including China, or China should say "no" to America and Russia?

They do not exactly know who they are. Post-Mao China and post-Communist, post-Yeltsin Russia are still defining themselves. The search for their places is still going on. Nobody knows what the final shape would be. There is a hidden possibility of a future collision between the two countries that are now talking as quasi-allies, or friends at least. But because they are still finding the path for their development, in a certain period of time, they could say: now we are good friends with America, but we are still not satisfied. Where is the enemy? Could it be China? Maybe the source of all Russian grievances is Chinese migrants. Should we kill them? Or vice versa. In China, in case there would be political turmoil or economical stagnation of China, millions and millions of people would become completely destitute. We got Hong Kong from Britain, we got Macao from Portugal, but then there is one million square kilometers of land that we still haven't claimed... go there and try to get it.

What China means to Russia

The image of China has been crucial for Russian self-definition between East and West. In order to position Russia in the civilization of the world, when you have one point of reference, that is the West. But when you get two points of reference, you can start thinking about your distance from both points.

All these famous disputes that were carried out by cultural studies scholars in the West and in China are still alive in Russia now. What are "Western values"? Is it corrupting individualism? And what are "Eastern values"? Is it communitarianism or collectivism? Which path should Russia follow? Of course, if you see individualism as corrupt, the terminology will motivate you not to follow this path. Those that do so are making use of the dissatisfaction with the Russian reforms of the nineties and the politicians who implemented it. Often, the mistakes of these reforms are simplistically put as "a pro-Western value bias," while "Eastern values" such as collectivism are portrayed as more appropriate for Russia.

On the one hand, you have people like the famous liberal journalist, Boris Kagarlitskii, who writes for *Novaya Gazeta*. He openly compares Russian skepticism about the Chinese with anti-Semitism. The Russians are getting more and more xenophobic. They hate Chechens and now they are adding to the list of hatred one more nation: the Chinese. Kagarlitskii insists that the "yellow" do not take away jobs but create them (Kagarlitskii 2000).

The Communists stay mum on the topic because their orientation is toward idealizing the Chinese Communist Party and its experience, which they juxtapose to Yeltsin's path of "ruining the people." Occasionally, they warn that the uncontrolled immigration of the Chinese is the result of the weakness of the Russian state. For the Communists, China as a state is not a potential enemy.

On the other hand, there is a non-Communist nationalistic discourse. The *Zavtra* newspaper, very famous in Russia for its nationalistic ideas, often publishes articles about China and the "Chinese problem" in the Far East. One article in *Zavtra* writes

that the Chinese behave in the Russian Far East “more or less like the conquerors of outer space in the fantasy action movies of Hollywood”: they plunder its natural riches to exhaustion while feeding Russians indigestible food (Shchurygin and Tukmakov 2001).

Another writer in *Zavtra* (Ilyushin 1998) concludes that empires need colonies. And the empire is China. The yellow-eyed tiger is walking around an agonizing deer (the symbol of Russia). It has no business to hurry.

At the same time, the nationalists applaud the Chinese government’s support of patriotism. Although *Zavtra* is anti-communistic, in 1996, the Chinese paper *Guang-ming Ribao*, considered the mouthpiece of the Chinese Communist Party leadership, invited Editor-in-Chief Alexander Prokhanov to China. In the article about his visit—entitled “Fifty questions at the Great Wall”—Prokhanov repeats the arguments of Chinese nationalist propaganda, contrasting them to Russia’s problems. He asks: What is the difference between us and the Chinese? Of course our civilizations are incompatible, but the history of Communism brought us together. So why are Chinese so successful and why are we not? First, because China had Deng Xiaoping, who controlled all dissent and did not permit any political freedom. Deng Xiaoping understood quite well that for a person intoxicated with freedom, freedom is deadly. The Chinese success lies in the fact that they did not permit any freedom; they did not destroy the public sector of the economy; they were not afraid to crush antigovernment demonstrations in 1989; they do not respond to any criticism from the so-called international community. And, he writes, now the Chinese have returned to Hong Kong, and are very rigidly saying that they cannot let Russians have the two islands near Khabarovsk. (See the section on the border dispute below.)

Prokhanov claims that China does not want to occupy Russian lands, although it has been capable of doing for some years. He prefers to portray the “Japanese samurai” as potential conquerors of the anemic Russian Far East (Prokhanov 2000).

The question of “cultural compatibility”

Another question is why, although Russians and Chinese have been communicating with each other for such a long period of time, there has been no apparent assimilation of each other’s culture. There was a Chinese community in Russia from the mid-19th century till the mid-20th century, first in the Far East and then all around Russia. In the early 20th century there were about 100,000 Chinese in Russia. Of course there was everyday communication between people, but there was nothing one could call a Sino-Russian culture produced by migrants. At the same time, there was a huge Russian community inside China, along the China Eastern Railroad that was built and owned by Russia, and later refugees who fled from the Communist Revolution in Russia. But they were also unable to create a Russo-Chinese culture. So, people said, maybe we have a firewall between our cultures.

After the Communist Revolution in China, 1712 Russian repatriates returned from Harbin to Sverdlovsk in the Soviet Union. Many of them were born in Manchuria and were in their late 40s and early 50s. At the time of their repatriation, they had to fill out official questionnaires. These questionnaires reveal that only 4.7% of them were

able to speak Chinese or Japanese, but more than 30% were able to speak one or even two European languages, English or French.

So there was a feeling that both sides were quite cold to each other. In the Russian case, you can explain it by the tragic situation *inside* Russia. Russian emigrants were consciously resisting any assimilation because it was a part of their sense of mission to keep Russian culture "pure" from barbarism, from Bolshevism, to keep their customs, keep their styles of life as they had been in Russia before 1917. They were training their children not to live in China but to return to Russia, to restore it after all that had happened during and after the revolution.

An example of assimilation

Vladimir Boyko, "Chinese Communities in Western Siberia in the 1920s–1930s," *Inner Asia*, 2001, no. 3, p. 25, fn. 12.

Vladimir Boyko described several examples of assimilation among Chinese in the Soviet Union in the first half of the 20th century:

Wang Ling-Ting, originally from Shandong, who had mastered the mirror-making business and learned Russian in Harbin, was one of those who corresponded to the notion of the Chinese as the "civilised nation of East Asia." He expanded his knowledge of sciences and Esperanto, subscribed to the local Russian newspaper Red Altai, carefully and skillfully budgeted personal expenses, and took care of his health. But the Barnaul bureaucrats, first in the police and then in the local government, put obstacles in the professional career of this talented foreigner, leaving him no option but to be an individual craftsman. He was saved neither by marrying a Russian woman, nor by accepting Soviet citizenship. In 1929, political detectives 'recognised' 'Valentin Valentinovich' as a spy—an officer of the Chinese army. He was sentenced to three years of reform labor and later eventually assassinated on false accusations in 1938.

But in the case of the Chinese migrants, it is more difficult to explain this lack of interest. That's why, even now, a lot of people say that Chinese *never* assimilate. When people say we need to invite more Chinese migrants, their answer is: what for? they *never* assimilate. And if there are too many, *they* will assimilate *us*; but they will never be an integral part of Russian society. And these opinions are justified precisely in terms of the lessons of the Chinese diaspora of the late 19th–early 20th century.

Discussion: Is there an interpenetration of cultures in the Russian Far East?

Olga Smirnova, Vladivostok: Chinese restaurants in Vladivostok have separate halls for the Chinese and for the Russians, because they eat in different ways. The Chinese eat with chopsticks and we eat with forks and knives. So if people do eat differently, what's wrong with respecting each other's habits and separating them?

You ask why there was no interpenetration of cultures, even though in the early twentieth century 30% of the population in the Russian Far East was Chinese. But first of

all, Chinese and Russians started coexisting in the Far East only in the 1860s, and in 1932, when Stalin killed 10,000 Chinese, it was all over. Do you think this is enough time for cultures to create something together? Yet in fact, there was a group of mixed Russo-Chinese parentage, the Taza.

Lomanov: You cannot confine the interaction of cultures to only those years. Let's remember the story of the Russian Orthodox mission in Beijing: 300 years. The earlier years of this mission, in the 18th century, were full of human tragedies. There were never as many cases of untimely death because of excessive drinking among missionaries as among the Russian missionaries in China. After ten years or so, of the original mission of ten people four or three were surviving. While Westerners were determined to convert China, the Russians were limited only to taking care of the small Russian community in Beijing. Those Russian priests were sent to China against their will and were absolutely unwilling to learn Chinese or to communicate with the Chinese.

There are, of course, exceptions. There is a community of descendants of those people who were taken from the town of Albazin by the Qing Army. They still live in China, some 300 people in Beijing and elsewhere, and they still unofficially keep their Russian names and keep the Orthodox faith, although they have absolutely no chance to attend any Orthodox services. They have been intermarrying with the Chinese for more than 200 years, the Russian Orthodox Parish in Beijing didn't exist for about fifty years, and Orthodox Christianity is not among the five faiths which are in Chinese Constitution, so they are in a legal limbo, they are not protected by the law, they are not supported by a rich foreign church, and each time they apply for something they are told "you are not permitted to do anything, you are not permitted to have faith, you are not permitted to have a church"—but they still regard themselves as Orthodox Christians.

The precarious position of the Orthodox Church has to do with bad memories connected with the so-called Russian tsarist aggression. The Russian Orthodox Church and the Russian mission are dubbed in official Chinese history a tool of Russian imperialistic aggression against China. At the level of official discourse, right now it's friendship, but all these political improvements have not influenced the position of the Russian Orthodox community in China at all.

Smirnova: Today as well, in the Far East of Russia there is more interpenetration of the two cultures than in the European part of Russia. There are plenty of Chinese restaurants. Everything in Chinese and Japanese is fashionable, from books about Confucius and Feng Shui by Russian authors to Chinese markets. Russians have started using Chinese sauces, and Chinese people have started to drink milk and eat fried potatoes. Chinese fast food in Vladivostok is like hot dogs in Moscow.

Many Russians know enough Chinese to communicate, and many Chinese speak Russian very well. At the Chinese markets, they all speak Russian. You don't have to learn Chinese when you come to a Chinese market. They know not only "How much?" and "Twenty," "Thirty," but also "Young lady, this fits you."

At Far Eastern State University in Vladivostok, where I work, the most popular foreign language is Chinese. It is very fashionable to study Confucianism. The first thing we studied in our philosophy course was Confucianism. We compared Western and Asian philosophers.

Lomanov: There are different levels to this debate. People feel interested, but they also feel safer about the Chinese if they live in separate ghettos and eat in separate restau-

rants. There is a Siberian city where residents protested against Chinese using the same public bathhouse as they did. So the decision was taken that the Chinese and Vietnamese will be served once a week and the local population on other days. What was interesting was the theoretization of the affair in the Moscow newspapers: Is it true that each guest must respect the customs of the host country? So in case you are a Chinese person in Russia, should you wash your body like the Russians do? Should you acculturate in this sense or you should keep your bathing identity? It was a little bathhouse-nationalistic discourse. If you are coming from Asia to Russia, when you cross the Russian border forget about your habits. Look at what the Russians do and wash your body and wash your clothes like the Russians do. Or do it separately if you cannot do it like we do. That's why the liberal newspaper *Obshchaia Gazeta* asked: Are we a European country if we can produce an ethnic conflict inside the public baths?

Smirnova: There are clubs with signs that say "Chinese only." And the police made a very big deal of them. They thought these clubs were meeting places of Chinese Mafia dons. The police came and grabbed all the presumed Mafia dons on the first night of the opening of this pub. If you cannot see what they are doing, you become suspicious.

Anna Urbanska, Poznań: In different situations, people interpret this cultural coexistence in different ways. Like the Jews in Poland: historically, we find a lot of Jewish people speaking German and a lot of Jewish people speaking Polish. But if something happens, then they are two separate societies.

Nyiri: Sasha Lomanov is talking about more or less elite discourses. The points about the Chinese that he mentioned are not made by huge masses of the Russian population. Can you link an elite discourse to a spontaneous-popular action such as the bathhouse affair? When you go down to the level of popular culture, then of course you have various controversial manifestations in various situations. I mean at a market, also at the Chinese market in Budapest, there is continuous interaction, there is mutual learning of languages at the personal level, but then, as Anna is saying, in certain situations, especially with the leadership of a particular group, you can switch on a completely different cultural discourse of antagonism. But that is the very complicated part: in what situations you switch on what at the actual level of human interaction.

When President Vladimir Putin and Jiang Zemin met in Moscow in the summer of 2001, President Jiang made a speech at Moscow University where he said that many people in China like the Russian poet Pushkin, Lev Tolstoy, and Tchaikovsky, the famous composer. He picked up three quite neutral figures from the Russian cultural tradition of the 19th–early 20th centuries. It was absolutely uncontroversial: he didn't enlist any Soviet figures. And in order to balance his statement, he said the Russians are getting more and more interested in the ideas of Confucius and Laozi, the Chinese philosophers. But later there was a strange response from President Putin. He said we should *not* confine ourselves to studying culture. When we are visiting each other it is not to learn about Pushkin and Confucius. We should learn more about higher mathematics and natural sciences.

So it was a friendly meeting, but it was a brilliant example of a cultural misunderstanding. Jiang Zemin made an attempt to create an illusory bridge between cultures.

Although this so-called interest in Confucius and in Laozi is actually limited to a very small segment of Russian intellectuals and students, Jiang made an attempt to pretend that we are interested in the classical traditions of each other and base our relations upon that presumption. First create an empty framework and later fill it with something. But Russian President Putin completely *missed* this cultural point. The idea of cultural interpenetration was rejected by the Russian leader, and it was rejected absolutely unconsciously. It is not as though he wanted to insult Jiang or to ruin this nonexistent cultural bridge.

Chinese and Russian views of the Sino-Russian treaty

China's reaction

In July 2001, China and Russia signed a treaty of friendship that elicited complicated reactions on both sides. Some of the Chinese say it is good. Why is friendship with Russia good for China?

"A quiet northern border"

So they can concentrate on the Taiwan issue and on their relations with the US. Russia is now weak and unable to do anything against China, but it is better to seek to institutionalize this peaceful situation along the northern border. It is good for China, because now they can save money on military spending and allocate it to civil projects.

"China can continue getting Russian weapons"

A friendly Russia can provide China with Western weapons in the current situation where under American pressure Israel declined to sell them to China in 2000. Russia still remains the only significant source of more or less modern weapons for China.

"Unconditional support on the Taiwan issue"

In exchange for support in international affairs like in Chechnya, Russia provides good political support for China in Taiwan.

But there are also skeptics in China. They say: What is good in this friendship with Russia?

"Previous treaties—in 1945 and in the 1950s—led to losses of territory"

They recall that Mongolia was completely lost to China due to the 1945 treaty signed by the Kuomintang and the 1950 treaty signed by the Communists.

"The Kremlin's military strategy is duplicitous"

The Kremlin is hedging between China and India, and military specialists could decide that India gets the most advanced weapons from Russia, not China. Russia is simply playing in a triangle by arming India in order to compel China to buy more weapons, to feel insecure.

"Irreconcilable histories of Sino-Russian treaties"

The Treaty of Nerchinsk of 1689 is regarded as good and equal in the Chinese narra-

tion of history and as bad and unequal in the Russian version. There is no way to produce a coherent history of Sino-Russian relations because all policies that in the Russian narrative are positive are negative in the Chinese narrative, and vice versa. What is equal in Russian histories is unequal in Chinese histories. It is a problem of compatibility of historical narratives. The Chinese say that the Nerchinsk Treaty was an equal treaty, but the Russians say it was signed under military pressure from China when the Russian delegation to China was surrounded by Qing troops. The Nerchinsk Treaty acknowledged Chinese suzerainty over most of Russia's current Amur Province, the southern half of Khabarovsk Region, and the whole of the Maritime Region, but an unexplored strip was left undelineated, pending further settlement.

4.1. A map of the Soviet-Chinese border with historical references



The 1858 Treaty of Aigun and the 1860 Treaty of Peking, by contrast, are treated as equal and good by the Russian narrative of history and bad and unequal by the Chinese. The Treaty of Aigun gave Russia control of the left bank of the Amur River, and the Treaty of Peking gave it the right bank of the Ussuri and granted Russian vessels navigating rights.

**Lomanov on Sino-Russian treaties
pre- and post-Westphalia see p. 44**

“There could be secret protocols unfavorable to China”

The public of both nations is suspicious because the previous treaty, signed by Stalin and Mao, had a secret protocol about mutual military assistance in case of an aggression. This time, the Russian and Chinese Ministries of Foreign Affairs have said that there are no secret protocols. But people are still suspicious. The Chinese are suspicious that maybe there is some secret protocol that gives away another part of our land that we don't know about, and will know only later. The Russians are suspicious that maybe Putin and Jiang Zemin decided on military assistance in case of aggression but decided not to disclose it. It is interesting how history taints the present.

Russia's view of the 2001 treaty

From Russia's point of view, this treaty created a big shift in the self-understanding of Russia's position within the system of bilateral relations. Before, Russia or the Soviet Union was the leader. Treaties were mostly proposed by the Kremlin to Zhongnanhai, to the Chinese government. But in this case, for the first time, the treaty itself was proposed by the Chinese.

For a long time, Moscow had been suggesting a new treaty with China, because the old treaty had expired in 1979 or 1980. And the Chinese replied, year after year: No, we shouldn't, because we are a sovereign nation and we don't have any alliances with any foreign nation. But when Russia stopped proposing this idea, Jiang Zemin himself suddenly produced the same one. In 2000, Jiang Zemin approached the Russian president: Don't you think that we should sign a treaty? This reversal of roles was quite unexpected for Russia, and it created another wave of suspicion. If this treaty was prepared by the experts of the Chinese, not the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, are there any hidden nuances that could later be used against Russian interests? And beyond that, the reversal of roles had a tangible impact upon the self-understanding of the Russian elite.

The border problem

Some Russian scholars say that the two states must conclude a new treaty about border demarcation, which would recognize the current border but not contain any references to the old treaties. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs does not support this, but the debate continues.

Lenin, the leader of the Russian Revolution, condemned tsarist Russia for annexing territories of China, and even wrote that China would be justified to start an anti-

colonial war against Russia. Of course he wrote this before 1917, but later the Chinese, who claimed to be true Marxist-Leninists while accusing the Soviet Union of revisionism, made a lot of references to it. If you Russians promised to say good-bye to your colonial and tsarist past, why won't you do it? Why won't you tear up all your former treaties?

A quite successful delimitation of the border between Russia and China which was carried out from the 1960s till 1991 was still possible under the common ideology of communism. Its successful accomplishment was the product of the Gorbachev era. Under Russia's current political system and in the current mood, if the delimitation were to be started now, it could fail.

In 1964, when the negotiations started, the Chinese demanded several things.

Recognition of unequal nature of the historical treaties

First of all, they demanded that Russia recognize that the treaties concluded by tsarist Russia and Qing China were unequal.

"Short list" of territorial claims

Second, they demanded the "restitution" of 22,000 square kilometers to China. There was also a so-called "long list" of territorial claims that included 1,500,000 square kilometers, but the "short list" was the basis of the talks in the 1960s.

Reconstruction of 64 Chinese settlements on the Russian side

Third, there was a very interesting attempt by the Chinese that could be interpreted as a remnant of the multiple identities of the pre-**Westphalian** states that Prasenjit Duara writes about. In the Aigun Treaty of 1858 there was a clause about sixty-four Chinese or Manchu settlements on the Russian side of the border, on the left bank of the Amur. The Manchu and Chinese population was permitted to remain permanently in these settlements and remain Qing subjects. In 1964, the Chinese government said to the Russian government: All right, you Russians stick to this unequal Treaty of Aigun, but you should at least be loyal to this unequal treaty. So reconstruct the 64 Chinese settlements.

Of course this idea was rejected by the Soviet government, because by that time this border area was completely clear of any Chinese or Manchu population. The Chinese countered: How to repopulate this area is our problem. We know how to do it; all you need to do is follow the treaty.

Chinese border patrols on Russian territory

Fourth, another demand was made that showed how the Chinese were still allowing the terms of overlapping sovereignty to creep in. This demand was to permit Chinese border patrols to patrol the border on the Russian side. The Chinese were saying: We dispute these five square kilometers, so let us patrol this land behind your backs. You can leave your own border patrols where they are, but we will station our patrols where we think the border should be. Picture two Communist nations, with absolutely clear identities of the border and citizenship, wrangling over these loopholes in the old treaties that were still the results of the pre-Westphalian system!

That's why some skeptics in Russia are very alert to the news of joint Russian–

Chinese patrols on the border. Are the Chinese trying to use these joint patrols to project influence *inside* Russian territory? Could the idea of joint border patrols between Russia and China be interpreted in pre-Westphalian terms? Is it an attempt to create an overlapping territorial identity? There are many confusing and unclear issues that are rooted deep in the past.

The 1964 negotiations had failed, especially because Mao Zedong openly talked to a Japanese delegation about the “long list” of claims for 1.5 million square kilometers of the Russian land in Siberia. China and the Soviet Union did not sign the treaty on the demarcation and delimitation of the border until May 1991. And in December 1991, the Soviet Union disintegrated.

The delimitation of 1991

Some people in the Russian Far East opposed this delimitation. In the Maritime Province of Russia, the Treaty of Aigun and especially the Treaty of Peking had drawn a clear border, most of which followed the Chinese bank of the Ussuri and Amur rivers.

**A map of the Soviet–Chinese border
with historical references see p. 83**

The idea discussed in 1964 and adopted in 1991 was to delimit the border following the deep water channel, i.e., roughly the middle of the river, instead. So, many parts the border moved, and the Chinese side received some parts of the territory

that had been controlled by the Soviet Union. The Maritime Province lost 27 square kilometers, and prominent local politicians complained that Russia didn’t receive anything in exchange. By contrast, China, according to the calculations of Boris Tkachenko—a local historian and prominent opponent of the delimitation—gained 700 islands with a total area of 720 square kilometers (Tkachenko 1999).

One of the arguments Tkachenko and local politicians used was that the treaty was signed by the Soviet government but ratified by the Russian parliament. So it was signed by one state and ratified by another. Another grounds on which they challenge the treaty was that in 1990, when Yeltsin was elected Speaker of the Russian Parliament, there was a declaration of state sovereignty of Russia, still within the Soviet Union. That declaration asserted that the Russian rather than the Soviet government had exclusive territorial sovereignty over Russia, and that any legal change in the territorial limits of Russia could only be made through a referendum. And of course there was no referendum about these islands in the Amur and Ussuri rivers.

Nationalists on both sides mirror each other. On the Chinese side, they say that all former treaties are unequal, so it could be possible in the future to challenge tsarist treaties signed by Russia and China about millions of square kilometers. On the Russian side, there are arguments that the delimitation treaty was not fair for Russia, and that it is possible to challenge it. Therefore skeptics are able to plant mines under this treaty from both sides.

The territorial business is closely linked with economics. Take the Tumen River project. It has been a dream of the Chinese government since as early as the 1860s to gain access to the Sea of Japan between Korea and Russia. The Tumen River project was based on the idea of constructing a deep-water port on the Chinese stretch of the

river and jointly—between Russia, China, and North Korea—creating a new transportation channel from there to the sea. There was also another idea, to trade some islands near Khabarovsk with Russia to gain sovereignty over part of the Tumen River. This part of the border is still not delimited. The islands are still under dispute. The Chinese say it is impossible to cede them to Russia, and the Russians say it is critically important to keep them.

Local nationalism opposing the center

I will discuss later how a *regional* patriotism developed in the Russian Far East during the process of border delimitation and confronting the issues of Chinese migration into Russia. Former Governor of the Maritime Province Evgenii Nazdratenko became known as a strong opponent of the Tumen River project and was hailed by the nationalistic press as an excellent patriot. Nazdratenko spoke out against the "treacherous demarcation": he positioned himself as a *regional* patriot who opposed the federal traitors. The arguments against the Tumen River project are that it would bring environmental degradation and decrease the traffic of the Transsiberian railway if China got its own access to the sea. The central government, by contrast, claimed that China, Russia, and North Korea had many shared interests and that the project would benefit all sides. But Nazdratenko pointed out that the negative effect of the project on railway traffic would not be felt by the central government, because cargo transit would still pass through Russian territory. But the section of the Transsiberian railway in the Maritime Province would become useless because the port of Nakhodka on Golden Horn Bay—the port of Vladivostok—would decline. Goods would be shipped directly from Japan to this new port in China.

But the economic argument in the opposition to the Tumen project was closely linked to a territorial argument. Let me cite again Boris Tkachenko. He said: There are only three options of how China can gain access to the sea: to buy a huge part of Russian land, which is not possible; to get a multilateral agreement with North Korea and Russia in order to perform a huge land reclamation and to make the shallow Tumen River into a deeper one; or to conclude an international lease agreement, similarly to the way the British leased Hong Kong. And of course it was quite easy to say: this is not Hong Kong; in case something would be leased by China for fifty years, we would never receive it back because China will be eager to reclaim this land for itself. So no land can be leased to China.

Economic relations: a mixed bag

Arms sales have been the most successful item in bilateral economic relations. But Chinese analysts occasionally accuse Russia of insincerity. *Strategy and Management* (*Zhanlüe yu guanli*), an influential journal in China, published an article entitled "The modernization of national defense and the problem of Taiwan" by a Chinese author. The author said that Russia had sold China 27 fighter aircrafts and Kilo class submarines, but this shouldn't be overestimated. Russia was mindful of its own interests and worried about China. It would never sell the most advanced weapons to China. It sold the

most advanced weapons to India. Moreover, Russia was not willing to spoil its relations with the West, especially with the United States. Each time it sold weapons to China, Russia supplied detailed technical information to the US. In case there was a conflict around Taiwan, the US would supply all this technical information to Taiwan. So we wouldn't be able to win this war. We need to build our own strong military.

When such things are openly pronounced, there is a certain degree of mistrust. On the one hand, Russian alarmists or skeptics say that the factory in Komsomolsk-na-Amure, which produces Su-27 aircraft, is a Chinese factory. It doesn't belong to China, but it produces for China only. The Russian Air Force has no new aircraft, but the Chinese receive them in the hundreds. On the other hand, the Chinese say: what we receive are old aircraft, and the Russian traitors supply all information about them to the US and to Taiwan. These aircraft are useless. That's how ambiguous the picture is.

What hinders cooperation between Russia and China in the economic field is partly real difficulties and partly discourses and stereotypes.

Poor perception of each other's products

Russia has been struggling for more than ten years to sell its high-tech products to China. Throughout the 1990s, Russian aircraft manufacturers were desperate to sell their aircraft. The aircraft were not bad, but Russian airlines were oversupplied with old Soviet machines, so they were not buying new planes. The Russian side appealed to China several times; but only during Jiang Zemin's visit to Moscow did the Chinese side officially agree to start negotiation on purchasing ten Tu-204 passenger aircraft. Jiang Zemin paid for signing the friendship treaty with this gesture.

On the other hand, the Chinese who went to Russia after the collapse of the Soviet Union sold products that had no markets in China because of their poor quality. The quality of Chinese goods is not among the top ten problems related to the Chinese migration that one hears from Russians. But, interestingly, it is among the top problems when you talk to Chinese scholars or officials.

Trade surplus

Russia is unfamiliar with the problem of trade deficit that plagues China's Western trade partners. In the 1990s, bilateral trade surplus have continued to grow and totaled over \$20 billion. China complains, but Russia exports more and more raw materials to China and buys fewer and fewer consumer goods, so the trade gap is growing year after year.

Environmental issues

This aspect is also both real and imaginary. Russians are, correctly, suspicious that the Chinese are polluting border rivers like the Amur and Ussuri, and there is no way to cooperate with them in cleaning up these rivers.

Russia cannot invest in improving the situation, and it cannot influence China to stop the development. The second problem has more to do with illegal migration: Chinese poachers and diggers of ginseng. There are horror stories about how the Chinese use electric shock to kill frogs.

Nyiri on standards of development

A bigger and conceptual problem is that the Chinese still do not understand the importance of Siberian forests to the survival of China itself. Chinese planners usually say: Let us come to Siberia, we will chop all trees and grow rice everywhere and build factories; it will develop, it will be like China! Why do you need all these wastelands? But in fact, China needs those forests even more than Russia, because in case this forest is chopped, Northeast China would start suffocating because the trees have long ago been chopped in this area of China, and the deserts are advancing.

This comment by the Chinese planners speaks to the issue of whether there are one or several standards of development. Before the Second World War, one US senator advocating aid to China became famous for suggesting to "Raise China higher, ever higher, until it reaches the level of Kansas." Today, Western anthropologists point out the need to take into account that standards of development may differ. Indeed, many developing-country leaders, including China's, like to reject the imposition of standards by America. Yet such episodes suggest that standards of development may have more to do with historical period than with culture: now Russian Far Easterners have walked away from the industrial and high-rise vision of modernity (or at least take into account other concerns), while the Chinese planners are keen to impose that vision on them. Their eagerness to do so also reflects the reversal of roles between Russia and China.

Pre-Soviet migration from China to Russia

The most important factor of Russian–Chinese interaction in the Russian Far East is the problem of Chinese migration to the region. In 1999, a famous nationalist member of the Russian State Duma, Sergei Baburin, proposed to revitalize the Baikal–Amur Railroad, a bypass railroad built to the north of the Transsiberian, farther away from the Chinese border. Baburin said that special investments should be made in the Baikal–Amur Railroad because there was a "silent Chinese expansion." Don't you know there are 1.5 million Chinese illegals in this region?, said Baburin in the Russian Duma. Another member of the Duma mentioned "Greater China, extending to the Arctic Ocean."

The issue of a Chinese population on Russian territory surfaced after the two treaties, of Aigun and Peking. In the very beginning of Russian colonization in the Far East—the middle of the 19th century—the Russian government even welcomed the Chinese to settle in Russia and gave them preferences. For example, they were exempt from taxes for 20 years. At the same time, Chinese officials continued to collect taxes from the local tribes, causing concern in the Russian administration.

Probably the first clash between the Russians and Chinese occurred in 1868. It was called the Manza War, *Manzovskaia voina*. "Manzy" was the Russian name for the Chinese population in those years. In 1868, the local Russian government decided to close down goldfields near Vladivostok, in the Gulf of Peter the Great, where 1,000 Chinese were employed. The Chinese decided that they did not want to go back, and resisted. The first clash occurred when the Chinese were removed from Askold Island,

in the Gulf of Peter the Great. They organized themselves and raided three Russian villages and two military posts.

For the first time, this attempt to drive the Chinese out was unsuccessful. And the government in Eastern Siberia increasingly saw the Chinese as potential bandits. But Russian scholars of those years came to conclude that the so-called *khunkhuzy*, Chinese bandits, were not a threat to Russian domination or control. They generally targeted other groups of Chinese and Koreans.

The *political* component of Chinese banditism emerged only in the year 1900. For the first time, *khunkhuzy* attacked the Russian city of Blagoveshchensk. It ended in the drowning of about 3,000 Chinese near Blagoveshchensk (called Hailanbao in Chinese). When during the **Boxer Uprising** Boxers and *khunkhuzy* assaulted Russian positions nearby, Cossacks stationed there decided to drive the Chinese from the Russian bank of the river back onto the Chinese bank. People were simply pushed into the river, and many of them drowned. Even Vladimir Lenin personally criticized the Russian tsarist government for its brutality. This is one of the dark pages of the history of Sino-Russian relations, one that is never publicly discussed in Russia but is present in all Chinese textbooks.

In 1910, before the First World War, there were 115,000 Chinese in Russia, and later the Chinese participated in mass-scale construction and defense infrastructure projects in the war. Discussions of the “Yellow Peril” became commonplace.

Then there occurred another story which has become traumatic, this one for the Russian nationalistic psyche. At the end of the year 1918, after the Russian Revolution, the Chinese merchants in the Russian Far East demanded the Chinese government to send troops for their protection, and Chinese troops were sent to Vladivostok to protect the Chinese community: about 1600 soldiers and 700 support personnel.

There was a story published in *Newsweek* around 1997, written as an imagined letter from the Russia of 2005. In this letter, Chinese President Li Peng sent troops to the Russian Far East because Russian President Lebed was unable to protect the 2 million Chinese settlers from the Russians, who were angry because the Chinese were already very rich and owned a lot of land. This story could be regarded, to a certain extent, as a descendant of the real story of 1918.

By the 1930s, the number of Chinese was reduced to about 50,000, and later Joseph Stalin's government accused the Chinese and Koreans of being Japanese spies.

It is an interesting question how deep the allegiance of Chinese residing in Russia to the Manchukuo state ran, or whether this was just a flimsy pretext for another lawless act of totalitarianism; at any rate they were deported and in part executed as Japanese spies. By 1989, there were only 10,000 naturalized ethnic Chinese living in Russia, and only half of them indicated the Chinese language as their mother tongue; the other half said that their mother tongue was Russian.

Post-Soviet migration

After the Russian borders opened to foreigners again in 1991, there was no longer a tradition of having a Chinese community in Russia, and there was nothing similar to Chinatowns in the West. Everything concerning the Chinese community in Russia is a

statement with a question mark. How many Chinese are there? Do we need to invite them? Do we need to expel them? Could Chinese immigration be stopped? Should it be stopped? How useful is it for the development of Russia?

There are many problems with estimating how many Chinese there are. First of all, in the Russian Far East, we have immigrants mostly from the neighboring provinces of China. In Vladivostok or in parts of Siberia, you mostly find people who come from Heilongjiang, Liaoning, Inner Mongolia, and partly from Jilin Province. In Moscow you can find people from all parts of China. People who come to Moscow mostly come to stay longer, and those who come to the Far East are mostly moving back and forth, doing business and making money.

In 1992, the Russian Government adopted a visa-free regime of travel between the Russian Federation and China. A high official of the Russian Foreign Affairs Ministry acknowledged in a private conversation in 2001 that this decision had opened the door to illegal migration, but said it had been necessary because of the disruption of trade distribution networks in the wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union, when the Russian Far East faced scarcity of food and consumer goods. Chinese traders had helped solve this problem.

The period from 1992 to the beginning of 1994 was the period of the greatest influx of Chinese migrants into Russia. In 1994, the visa-free agreement was limited to diplomatic and service passports, and from the spring of 2001, it was narrowed to diplomatic passports only.

Visa-free group tourism in bordering provinces is still there. The Russian Foreign Ministry could easily call on Beijing to cancel this arrangement, but the visa statistics show that the number of Russian visitors to China increasingly exceeds the number of the Chinese visiting Russia. The number of Chinese tourists and visitors is slowly declining, and the number of visitors from Russia to China is growing. So the Russian government is reluctant to cut visa-free border tourism.

Numbers

In Moscow, the City Department of Visas and Registrations said in 1999: we have only 10,000 Chinese officially registered in Moscow. Later, they said: there are probably several *hundred* thousand Chinese in Moscow, but they are unregistered. So we don't know where they are.

On one end, you have official statistics, which are the smallest numbers. On the other, the biggest ones are just journalism or alarmist political statements, where the figures are exaggerated. Official figures are unbelievably small, and alarmist figures are unbelievably large. Between these two extremes, there are two more sets of figures. One set is by scholars who work for state institutions, like the Russian Academy of Sciences and universities. Sometimes they are critical of official statistics. Usually, if you get an official figure of ten, scholars who work for official institutions will give you something like 100.

Zaionchkovskaia and Gelbras, using funds from the Carnegie Foundation, the MacArthur Foundation, or the Ford Foundation, obtained estimates in between the alarmist figures of millions and official statistics' dozens. According to the study carried out by Professor Gelbras, the number of Chinese in Moscow is 22 to 25 thousand.

The Migration Service says there may be 30,000 Chinese residents in Russia. The 2002 census say 3,000. Scholars' figures range between 400 thousand and 1 million. A study by Vitkovskaia and Zaionchkovskaia shows 200,000 to 300,000 Chinese in Eastern Siberia and the Far East by the late nineties. How do people produce such figures as two or three million Chinese in Russia? There are no rational explanations.

Then there is yet another set of figures, that of the Chinese authorities. The Chinese state also claims to know how many Chinese there are in Russia, down to the individuals. First of all there is a figure from the embassy. And second, there is a figure from the so-called *Qiaoqing Pucha*, the Overseas Chinese Census, which is done through relatives of the migrants in China. The questionnaires are sent to families in China.

And finally, there are indirect ways of estimating the number of the Chinese. In the summer of 2001, a Tu-154 aircraft of the airline Vladivostok-Avia flying from Yekaterinburg in Western Siberia to Vladivostok crashed near Irkutsk, and ten percent of the passengers were Chinese. Several of them were illegals. Can we see this as a random sample of the local population and conclude that Chinese account for ten percent of that segment of the local population which can afford flying? (Another interesting detail is that this plane had been used by a Chinese airline before having been purchased by Vladivostok-Avia. Russian papers immediately speculated that the accident is the fault of the Chinese airline that had not properly maintained the plane. Yet the investigation pointed to pilot error.)

This provocative way of "estimating" just serves to illustrate that even an estimate like this would be more reliable than saying there are three million Chinese. The latter figure means nothing at all, and yet it is cited by many scholars, and politicians, who do not even explain how they get it.

The current situation

The image of Chinese migrants is very different from the perception of migrants of other countries. It also varies between Russian regions. For example, in Central Russia, or even in Moscow, there are refugees from Afghanistan. After the collapse of the political regime that was loyal to the Soviet Union, many political and military figures of that regime escaped to the Soviet Union. Now they represent a poor and underprivileged part of migrants. Their links with the motherland are completely severed—or at least they were before the toppling of the Taliban regime.

By contrast, the image of the Chinese migrant, at least in the central part of Russia, is that of somebody who is well connected with his native land and who came to Russia to enrich himself. You can find similar stories in Southeast Asia where the real or presumed wealth of the Chinese community creates contradictions. People conclude: This wealth is not fair; it was built at the expense of the development of the native Russian population.

Are the Chinese economic migrants or simply businessmen who come to another country to make money? There is an idea that if the Chinese continue coming to Russia, they'll take all jobs in construction and agriculture, which are badly paid, and it would be quite easy to solve Russia's problems because the Chinese would do the work that Russians are not willing to do. Peasants who are coming from the areas bor-

dering Russia are eager to do some labor of this kind, but it is very hard to say whether the Chinese are complementing Russians or stealing jobs. But according to another study by Vitkovskaia, 47% of the Chinese residing in the Russian Far East and Siberia are engaged in trade, and 65% of them are not willing to be workers.

Only the scholars who are working using American money had a chance to enter the Chinese community, because they had the money to do fieldwork and administer their own questionnaires. Official scholars usually take what they know from paper sources for granted. And they never penetrate into the Chinese community. The only scholars who have done research in the Moscow communities of the Chinese were Gelbras and his team, who worked for the Carnegie Foundation.

Gelbra's team observes that, as the Chinese themselves say, in Moscow they have two enemies: the police and skinheads. In 1999, when after two explosions in Moscow, people's identity papers were checked especially rigorously, the Chinese disappeared from the streets for half a year; but they didn't disappear from the city. In Moscow, there are more than ten hostels that are completely Chinese. They are like small Chinese islands, not Chinatowns but China-buildings scattered all around Moscow. They are mostly controlled by the Chinese. There are Chinese guards at the doors. In Moscow's markets, Chinese almost never trade goods themselves. Usually they own a market stall, but often they do not appear there themselves but hire a Russian or another migrant, from Ukraine or Belarus, as the salesperson.

Interestingly, rather than seeing this as a sign of openness, Russians interpret it as more evidence for the Chinese being a closed community, as unwillingness to communicate with Russian customers. They are involved mostly in operations controlling the flows of goods. They communicate with people who are at the market, but the leaders never appear at the market themselves. Some Moscow tabloids even claim that almost each Chinese hotel in Moscow has its own bordello, and they never hire Russian girls. Whether true or not, it reinforces the image of a self-enclosed community that avoids all communication with the Russians.

Problems inherited from history, like the assessment of the legacy of the border delimitation, greatly influence the perception of the Chinese community. The perception of Chinese communities is linked with an idea of the future disintegration of Russia due to their growth.

Approaches to Chinese immigration

The guest worker argument

Today there are two opposing approaches to Chinese migration in Russia. The "economic" approach calls for expanding immigration, particularly from China, as a solution to Russia's economic problems. A well-known sociologist, Zhanna Zaionchkovskaia, Head of the Department of Migration at the Institute of National Economics Forecasting of the Russian Academy of Sciences, argues: The Russian population is declining. The population in the Far East is shrinking at double pace, because many people are returning from the Russian Far East to the western part of Russia. So, she says, quite soon labor will be the most deficient resource in the development of Russia. But we are lucky! We have a neighbor that has an abundant labor force! Professor Zaionchkovska-

ia is sure that it is necessary to invite Chinese to come to Russia. Her projection is that by the middle of this century, there will be at least 10 million Chinese in Russia, or maybe 20 million, equal to 20% of the immigrant labor force that should come to Russia. And, she argues, enemies of immigration must understand that only immigration could build up the Russian service sector, transportation, communication, and the construction industry.

But is everything so simple? There are many questions about it. There is no clear-cut strategy yet for the development of the Russian Far Eastern and Siberian economy. Should it be a raw materials-based economy or should it focus on developing technologies? Therefore the need for labor is as yet unclear. Is it reasonable to start inviting migrants now? Nikita Khrushchev, the former Soviet leader, wrote in his memoirs that in the late 1950s there had been an idea to invite one million Chinese to the Soviet Union to cut trees and do other work. They invited several thousands, and later those who were involved in economic planning found out that it was simply a calculation mistake, there was no need even to invite hundreds of Chinese. There was plenty of local resources. On the other hand, if most Chinese really intend to go into trade rather than into wage labor, do we need 10 million or 20 million *traders* in the Russian markets?

The geopolitical argument

Russian nationalists are obsessed with the idea of the Chinese threat, of Chinese migrants who will not be absorbed within the Russian society. But also many more moderate politicians call for closing the door to Chinese migration because, they argue, it raises the threat of compact Chinese-populated regions that may later split from the Federation. These arguments emphasize that a “re-Sinification” of the Russian Far East and its eventual return to China appear quite legitimate within the view of history that is taught in the People’s Republic of China.

A famous liberal Russian journalist, Otto Latsis, Deputy Editor-in-Chief of *New Izvestiya*, raises the specter of a “Kosovo scenario” where Russians would stand for the Serbs, and Chinese, no longer obeying Russian structures of power, for the Albanians. It would be two communities split apart and hating each other. Latsis predicts that when the Chinese outnumber the Russians they will start a secession movement, there will be huge bloodshed in Siberia, and the Russian government will be forced to bomb its own land.

Prospects for the future

For ten years, there has been no selection of Chinese who were coming to Russia. As a result, there is now a sense that we have built a self-isolated community that is absolutely unwilling to integrate into Russian society. This has become a source of nationalistic emotions. Talking about this immigration, we usually concentrate on the problem of China. Participants in this debate, including academics, rarely make the point that in a democratic state, and Russia pretends to be one, immigration policy cannot be based upon the norm of ethnicity. There cannot be another Chinese Exclusion Act as there was in the past in the United States, Canada, or Australia.

The Russian government is now changing its migration policy. In 2001, it adopted

a new migration program, creating conditions for the immigration of Russian speakers from the former Soviet Union.

In case Russia feels that it needs to attract new labor force into the country, the only conclusion could be an institutionalized system that would test people, and it cannot be confined only to some ethnic groups. Everybody should be able to prove that they can accommodate themselves in Russian society, support themselves, and learn the Russian language. In Russia, debates about a systematic approach to immigration are always around ethnic Russians or about Chinese. Nobody raises the idea of inviting Indians. But after all, why not invite migrants from India, as overpopulated as China, or from North Korea?

A discussion on immigration policy

Lomanov: Is there a need to invite migrants to Russia from other countries in order to develop the Russian economy? In case we really need 20 million or 40 million migrants in order to keep the Russian economy developing, who should be invited and on which criteria? On a temporary or permanent basis? Is the ability of Russian institutions to manage or control the system or implement the criteria the main limiting factor for having an open immigration program? According to Gelbras's study, only 13% of Chinese people who are living in Russia are able to speak Russian. In case we invite migrants to stay in Russia for a long time or forever, should we test them for Russian language proficiency? In order to prepare the population of the Russian Far East to accept immigrants, do we need to teach them Chinese culture? Do you want a language test for anybody who comes in, or do you want a language test only for those who want to stay forever? What are the financial implications? And what do we give them in return?

Migrants can be asked to prove that they have no criminal record or that they have paid tax in China. Interviews can also help in the selection process. Of course they are quite subjective, but the immigration official who will talk with the candidate can try to find out whether he seems ready to adapt to Russian society. Another possibility is "business immigration," which is best known in Canada. In case you go as a "business immigrant" or investor immigrant, you first must invest your own money in Canadian businesses. First they invest 300,000 Canadian dollars into the Canadian economy, and only later can they move to Canada and receive all social welfare.

Can and should the criteria of selection take into account the likelihood of assimilation? In the 18th century, when German immigrants were invited to the Polish city of Poznań, only young couples with children of the Catholic faith were accepted, with a view that these were more likely to assimilate. Or are these historical ideas of assimilation obsolete?

Should the focus be on integrating those migrants who are already in Russia rather than inviting new ones? Or both?

Or is it useless to argue whether we need more Chinese or not? The government of Russia should make clear that it wants to establish a market economy. Should it just permit a free flow of capital and labor and focus on regulations and sanctions that will make the market operate well, eliminate fraud and tax evasion, and create incentives to channel migrants into important industries?

Zha: Let us consider the case of postwar Japan, an island nation that is also a former colonial power. Before and during the Second World War many Koreans moved or were

moved to Japan to alleviate a labor shortage for the war economy. The Japanese do not expect them to be Japanese in any way. You have many Koreans just stuck in Japan doing the “three D”—dirty, dangerous, and low-paid—jobs. Ethnic Koreans have built up their own “fortresses.” You can see signs in Korean writing saying: “Japanese stay out or else I have a bullet for you.”

During the “bubble economy” of the eighties, the Japanese found another solution to the labor shortage and brought in Filipinos, Thais, and Iranians. The Filipinos and the Thais were normally dancers and prostitutes, and Iranians did the construction work. Their perception was: You look different, we don’t expect you to speak Japanese, you are prostitutes. No joke about it. Even if a Filipina dressed up as a Japanese, it didn’t help.

Then there was crime, there were problems with people overstaying their visas. A park in Tokyo was occupied by Iranian laborers who failed to go back to Iran, and some of them had fathered children by Japanese women. Then what do you do?

In the early 1990s, the Japanese government found a third solution. Let’s bring in ethnic Japanese, second- or third-generation descendants of Japanese migrants to South America. They are coming to do the “three-D” jobs, but they want to be Japanese. But a third-generation Brazilian-Japanese immigrant sued the Japanese government because he was denied service. They go to the baths, they look Japanese, and yet they are kicked out. Or they go to the convenience store and they are not served. This became so bad that it became an issue when Japan ran for positions in the UN.

In the late 1990s, the Japanese found a fourth solution: the Chinese. And of course the same story goes on. Now you have a Chinese government lawyers group helping Chinese laborers who get mistreated in Japan.

What happens here? You have a clash of identities, a clash of cultures. When immigration takes place, the government’s maneuvering space is very limited. The government can control such matters as the terms of stay and crime. The forces in society the government cannot direct or control. But there is something more fundamental about that. Whether people live in their home country, whether they go to another country, they look for something more than money. Humans are not animals that follow water or grass. Migration is a learning process. It is more than just economics, there is cultural change, there is assimilation, there are many dimensions to it. If a land does not feel very hospitable, they move on, somewhere else.

My point in talking about the Japanese case is that thinking there can be a perfect solution to human migration is a fallacy. Migration is a troubling event. You have extreme responses such as in Germany, some skinheads responding to migrants from Turkey or Africa. Or you can have the Canadian response: anybody can come in with a minimal investment—let’s give this person welfare and give him a chance to get started. You have the American philosophy, which is that the government attempts to control migration but essentially accepts immigrant flows until there is an acute problem. If you go to Miami, they have elected a Cuban emigrant to be the mayor. It is a different level of acceptance.

Part of the idea of the “China threat” comes from the psychological factor that there are just so many Chinese. Chinese leaders know that. Deng Xiaoping in 1970 in Tokyo mentioned this, very bluntly, talking about how the US was telling China to allow its people the freedom of migration. He said: “No problem. How many millions do they want?” One of the changes the Chinese government made in response to the students’ protest in 1989 was to make it easy to get a passport. The Chinese government turned the table around: it is not that we don’t allow you to go. It is these stupid foreign embassies that don’t give you a visa. And that was probably a means to diffuse tension.

Chinese were literally dying to go to Hong Kong in the '60s and the '70s. They cut fences and electric wires. The Hong Kong solution to this, immediately after China opened up in 1979, was building factories inside mainland China along the border, bringing new machines and managers from Hong Kong. The result was a transformation of the Hong Kong economy. Back in the '70s, Hong Kong was making plastic chairs, plastic flowers, telephone sets—it was not a big deal. Because they were able to move the labor force to Shenzhen, to Zhuhai across the border, they could upgrade Hong Kong to a financial service center. They used the profits to educate themselves, learning Western banking.

Look at Shenzhen itself. In 1979, it had a population of 3,000 persons. Today it has millions. This crucial element of joint production is missing from Sino-Russian economic exchange. What has been going on is trade and trade and trade. Even in aircraft business.

Nyiri: There is an important difference in the Russia–China case compared to the Hong Kong–China case. *Vis-à-vis* Russia, China is the country where the capital is, and paradoxically also where the cheap labor is. Usually capital is in one place and cheap labor in another, and there is a certain dynamic. But in this case, the Russians who live in the Far East continuously talk about incredible unemployment and poverty on the Chinese side, which is probably what makes people go to Russia. But the Chinese cities across the border look better than Vladivostok, and there is more production.

Zha: Still, the Russians can design things together with the Chinese, for the Russian market or the Western markets. And there is a huge consumer market within China itself that remains to be detected.

And now a note of caution. I've been a migrant overseas since 1988. I never feel I am mistreated, even though the general image of a Chinese living in Japan is one of racial tensions.

You can get carried away if you rely on personal experiences and impressions. Remember the criterion of admissible evidence in research. Personal stories matter, but at what level are they admissible as evidence? If you occupy your research with your personal impressions, aren't you missing something larger? The last thing you want to do is to have a model UN type of exercise where you represent China, you represent Canada, you represent your home country, everybody goes in there, delivers a very nationalistic speech, refuses to listen to the other side, and walks away.

Chapter 5

Minorities, Homelands and Methods

LOUISA SCHEIN

The relationship between nationalism and transnationalism

As Zha Daojong points out, there are different kinds of nationalism. We can talk about state or official or economic nationalism, which is primarily associated with government organs, official statements, official media, and policies. Or we can talk about popular or ethnic nationalism, which I want to deal with here. Nationalism shouldn't only be associated with states and central governments; it can also be produced and disseminated by groups not associated with states and their boundaries. This is what I will call "deterritorialized nationalism."

Zha on different kinds of nationalism

The term "nationalism" is often prefixed with various modifications in order to differentiate the scope of inquiry in one particular study from reference to a broad, and indeed global, phenomenon as the term tries to capture. Such prefixes can be references to a research object, one component of a country's foreign policy, sponsors of projects to foster national consciousness, or seemingly apolitical projects that can be understood as part of a nationalistic agenda. Examples include "American nationalism," "economic nationalism" of many countries, "state nationalism" and/or "popular nationalism," and connections between sports and nationalism (Fousek 2000, Bairner 2001). At one level, as is true in studies of "security," arguably the most enduring concern in IR, adding more prefixes does not necessarily lead to conceptual clarity. At another level, there are perhaps few other choices than going with more prefixes, both as a result of the context for research and in response to the demand for precision in elaboration.

When the prefix to "nationalism" is reference to a state or a civilization, subjectivity easily sets in. This is true of not just the conceptual gaps in the debates over the so-called "clash of civilizations" thesis (i.e., a purportedly Western civilization versus a Confucian civilization, which is understood to be in collaboration with an anti-West Islamic civilization). Research rhetoric about nationalism within the same geographic area—Europe—also makes a distinction between "good" and "bad" nationalisms. More importantly, such tendencies are not restricted to discussions about Cold War politics; they take on a far more historical dimension.

The situation is similar to studies of "security," another key concept in IR (see Miller 2001).

The issue of scales is also important in describing different types of nationalism: In addition to official nationalism, we can identify the subnational and the supranational. The subnational includes minorities and other kinds of organizations that are below the level, or scale, of a certain state. Supranational refers to transnational identifications and movements.

The nation and the state

American literature on nationalism sometimes refers to the problem of the hyphen between “nation” and “state.” Conferences and workshops in the US are devoted to “interrogating the hyphen.” This phrase is a shorthand way of suggesting that there may not be a one-to-one correspondence between states or countries and practices and productions of nationalism. So to start with, let’s look at the issue of the hyphen.

One article concerned with the exploration of this hyphen is Arjun Appadurai’s (1993, reproduced in 1996) “Patriotism and its Futures.” It has both had tremendous influence and been very heavily critiqued.

Appadurai’s concept of transnationalism: loyalties that transcend or replace the nation-state

If the territorial state has fixed political boundaries and a clear sense of the territory that belongs to it, questions arise about whether national loyalties are always associated with and directed at the territorial state. What other kinds of territories or nonterritories might be relevant in considering national loyalties? The first sentence of Appadurai’s article—a very famous sentence—reads, “We need to think ourselves beyond the nation.” By this, he indicates a “postnational” research agenda that will allow scholars to address other forms of nonstate collective identity. He wants to consider which of these should also be considered nationalism. He wants to retain the idea of a national form, but he wants it to be divorced from the territorial state.

I think that Appadurai should have written, “We need to think ourselves beyond the state” (Appadurai 1996: 158), because this article talks about types of loyalty that are no longer attached to the political unit of the state. He says, “while nations might continue to exist, the steady erosion of the capabilities of the nation-state to monopolize loyalty will encourage the spread of national forms that are largely divorced from territorial states” (Appadurai 1996: 169). Thus he is not necessarily thinking beyond the nation, but he asks: If you are not referring to a territorial state, but to other forms of loyalty and identification, is it still appropriate to call it nationalism? This becomes very important when we start talking about minorities and migrant groups.

Chinese transnationalism

What do we mean by Chinese transnationalism? Do we think about it as a national identity or as a deterritorialized nationalism? Or do we mean a translocal identity, which implies that we are talking about connections between places within one or various states, and not necessarily between the states?

What kinds of terms might be appropriate to talk about Chinese transnationalism?

We have a very strong state and a very bounded political unit that operates as a nation-state in relation to other nation-states around the globe. But then we have very strong Chinese communities in places like Singapore, where Chinese are in a majority, and in places like Malaysia, Vietnam, and Thailand, where Chinese are in the minority.

Is nationalism useful at all as a way of talking about how Chinese both within and beyond China might experience or practice loyalty? From the perspective of the territorial state, you would only call it nationalism when Chinese overseas come back and give money to the development of the homeland, or follow Chinese politics. From the perspective of ethnic nationalism, it would be a loyalty to a sense of Chineseness, no longer needing the territorial state to constitute an identity, but rather the concept of a Chinese people. This is what some recent literature has referred to as "Greater China." Of course, there is always a reference to the Chinese homeland, but what becomes more important is the sense of the Chinese as a people.

Appadurai refers to the idea of a nation flourishing transnationally in relation to migrant communities: "Safe from the depredations of their home states, diasporic communities become doubly loyal to their nations of origin and thus ambivalent about their loyalties to America." Further on, he speaks of "a delocalized transnation, which retains a specific ideological link to a putative place of origin but is otherwise a thoroughly diasporic collectivity" (Appadurai 1996: 172).

One way of thinking about this double loyalty is as a sense of loyalty to the Chinese state, and also a sense of commitment to one's own Chinese community. In the places I know about in America, Chinese often have strong organizations and think of themselves as Chinese Americans or Chinese Canadians. Much of this loyalty is not directed at the Chinese state. But at the same time, their double loyalty makes them ambivalent about their loyalty to America or other countries.

Ong on diaspora

I want to keep the integrity of the word "diaspora," which is a kind of involuntary exile. To assume that all Chinese out of China are in diaspora is totally absurd. I wouldn't use it as an analytical category.

I did a test: I asked my Jewish American students, "Are you a diaspora subject?" and the vast majority said: "No." The greatest diasporas are Europeans all over the world in the colonial context. For me diaspora is better to be talked about as a term of a sentiment. It is just a comment people use to describe how they feel, who they are; this is a personal, subjective feeling, a set of sentiments, a sense of being in exile. But to call anyone simply on the basis of ethnicity a diaspora subject is really a wrong use of the word.

I used to be blamed because I mentioned "Chinese diasporas." I came from a Chinese diaspora. For me it was a real diaspora. For a long time, people had the sense that they would have lived in China if not for specific reasons, and culture was always connected back to China. But that's gone. So contemporary circulations are not automatically diasporas.

For a lot of diasporas, the place of origin is putative or imagined. For many Chinese, this origin place does not necessarily have much to do with the Chinese state,

its economic development, policies, or contemporary realities: it is more the idea of a homeland. And for some Chinese migrants whose families have been in, say, Thailand or Malaysia for many generations, this place of origin is not something that they have direct links to or experience of.

Appadurai says, “no idiom has yet emerged to capture the collective interest of many groups in translocal solidarities, cross-border mobilizations, and postnational identities. Such interests are many and vocal, but they are still entrapped in the linguistic imaginary of the territorial state” (Appadurai 1996: 166). Many of these mobilizations and loyalties are not even organized around an ethnic or cultural group. Appadurai mentions transnational philanthropic movements, such as Habitat for Humanity, international terrorist organizations, international fashion, environmental movements, refugees, and the Olympic movement. The idea of postnational loyalties and mobilizations has to do with all types of connections, organizations, and identities that people might adopt at the supranational scale.

One conclusion we can draw from this article is that territorial nations and deterritorialized identities can coexist, and that any one transnational actor can potentially be loyal simultaneously to a territorial nation and a deterritorialized or translocal identity: whether Chineseness or a green movement. Thinking beyond the nation-state does not mean making the nation-state irrelevant or obsolete. One of the key problems becomes to consider how the nation-state and the translocal, transnational organizations and collectivities interact and coexist.

Why is the vocabulary of the nation so linked to territoriality? Duara talks about the rise of the nation-state as the globally dominant form, dominant to the point of being hegemonic, to being standard; to the point that you can only be a global player if you are a nation-state with an intact hyphen. Remember what Duara says about nationalism being controlled by those who get to claim authenticity.

Duara on authenticity see pp. 18–19

Even now, with the recognition of so many different kinds of collectivities, both subnational and supranational, the nation-state is still the reference point for seeking legitimacy, authority, and respectability on the global stage. The real question is not so much whether we, the academics, do away with the label of nation for a state. Indeed, in some places nation and state have never been coextensive.

Gellner on the overlap between nations and states

in *Nations and Nationalism*. Oxford and Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell, 1983; p. 4.

Not all societies are state-endowed. It immediately follows that the problem of nationalism does not arise for stateless societies. If there is no state, one obviously cannot ask whether or not its boundaries are congruent with the limits of nations. If there are no rulers, there being no state, one cannot ask whether they are of the same nation as the ruled. When neither state nor rulers exist, one cannot resent their failure to conform to the requirements of the principle of nationalism. One may perhaps deplore statelessness, but that is another matter. Nationalists have generally fulminated against the distribu-

tion of political power and the nature of political boundaries, but they have seldom if ever had the occasion to deplore the absence of power and boundaries altogether. The circumstances in which nationalism has generally arisen have not normally been those in which the state itself, as such, was lacking, or when its reality was in any serious doubt. The state was only too conspicuously present. It was its boundaries and/or the distribution of power, and possibly of other advantages, within it, which were resented.

This in itself is highly significant. Not only is our definition of nationalism parasitic on a prior and assumed definition of the state: it also seems to be the case that nationalism emerges only in milieux in which the existence of the state is already very much taken for granted. The existence of politically centralized units, and of a moral-political climate in which such centralized units are taken for granted and are treated as normative, is a necessary though by no means a sufficient condition of nationalism.

But the point is that the states insist that they are nations. We are here talking about the claim, not really discussing any sort of reality, but constructs. The fact that Native Americans began referring to themselves as nations in the process of their struggles for recognition shows that the appeal of the nation is still very compelling. In the same way, the organization Queer Nation is about sexual identity rights and recognition for lesbians, gays, and other sexual minorities. Even though many of these transnational collectivities don't aspire to creating a political unit with a boundary and a territory, the appeal of the concept of nation is still very strong.

But this results in the word "nation" being used in an increasingly confusing way. The confusion comes from the fact that the hyphen is in crisis. It is in crisis because there are all these other deterritorialized groups, collectivities, identities that are also claiming or using the nation construct. Meanwhile the state also needs the nation construct to legitimize its existence. So there is a really existing tension in the world of identity politics that is being played out and reflected in the debates of academic literature.

What are the implications of deterritorialization for research?

How might deterritorialization work in and between varying sites in Asia and in Asian Diasporas? What specific research problems might these differing sites and circumstances pose?

For example, can we find examples of the Soviet State creating territorialized nations in Central Asia and drawing borders across ethnic groups? Was, for example, the Kazak nation created by the Soviets? Would there be a Kazak nation if not for the Soviet Union now? Or would there be a mixture of various ethnic and rural populations, speaking different languages and following ethnic and subethnic divisions? Are there any challenges to the nation-states, cosmopolitanism and transnationalism, today in this region?

And that is precisely one of the reasons Appadurai's article continues to be critiqued ten years later. People still want to say that we are not in a postnational moment, that the nation is still strong. There is always confusion between nation and state when people talk about this article. I think Appadurai himself knows that the nation form

is not dead. But somehow this article has come to represent the idea that it should be dead, that somehow we should see past it. Empirically it is not happening; the idiom of the nation is still very resilient. Scholars have shown that the way people think about identities is still very much tied to the authority of the nation-state form, even though it may not match very well with the reality of how identities are being experienced and practiced.

Diasporas and migration

In recent literature, there has been a shift toward talking about diaspora studies instead of migration studies. This shift can be interpreted as a critique of the trend in migration studies to focus on the side of the receiving society: questions of assimilation, adaptation, and other issues of how people who left their homelands deal with being in a new society. Migration studies also connotes the history of how and why people left. The framework of migration studies is the move from one nation-state to another. The questions asked are: what happens to them there, how they form communities, how their culture change, do they teach their children their language.

Nyíri on what's wrong with migration theories

What has changed with migration in the last 30 years?

The "new migration" (Vertovec and Cohen 1999)

1. *More migration.* In the early 1970s there was a virtual halt to legal labor immigration for the purposes of permanent settlement to the more powerful industrialized countries of Western Europe and North America. This was not a real "immigration halt" but political rhetoric to dampen nationalism and xenophobia. But seen at a global level, migration increased. With the collapse of the Communist world, most countries have abandoned controls on the exit of their populations, and some have encouraged it.

2. *New labor migration routes.* Legal labor migration took new avenues: e.g. from Asia to the Middle East, more developed countries of Northeast and Southeast Asia, and to a limited extent to Russia. Castles (1998) estimates that three million Asians were legally employed in Asia and another three million elsewhere (Gulf states) in the mid-1990s.

3. *Undocumented labor migration.* It is widely supposed that undocumented labor migration has taken the place of legal: from Mexico to the US; from African countries to South Africa; from Northern Africa, Eastern Europe, and Asia to Western Europe. This occupies a wide range from overstaying to illegal entry. It is often assumed that irregular entry is a domain of organized crime, but it is probably better pictured as a business with both legal and criminal avenues ranging from taking money for issuing a legal invitation letter to a person with all the legal documents to the forgery of passports and visas and clandestine crossing.

4. *Independent female migration.* Feminists in the 1960s declared that "women were hidden from history." This observation had largely been valid in migration studies. Many studies of migration either dealt with women only as part of those "left behind" or studied them only as dependent migrants. The increase in independent female migration has been significant both numerically and sociologically. In part this has been elicited by demand

specifically for female labor—from domestics to prostitutes—that could not be domestically satisfied at the same costs.

5. *Highly skilled transients.* Expatriate accountants, computer experts, lawyers, academics, doctors, managers, engineers, and consultants who move around the world as freelancers or corporate employees are also “hidden from history,” albeit in a very different way. They have no local political or social rights in their temporary places of residence and do not usually seek them: instead of the state, they often deal with the employer, which provides insurance, education for children, and pension.

6. *Investor-immigrant and skilled immigrant schemes.* A number of countries, particularly Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, but also the United States, have implemented schemes to offer permanent residence to people who are prepared to invest substantial amounts or who possess particular skills. Canada and Australia have linked immigration, labor, and economic policies so that immigration vacancies are in sync with employers’ needs. The United States has introduced special visas, the H-1Bs, to admit around a hundred thousand skilled temporary workers (most of them software engineers) each year.

7. *Migration as business.* Migration has developed into a complex and lucrative global business, which brings lots of money to governments, lawyers, universities, and other migration brokers, including criminal ones, worldwide. Each of these players attempts to regulate or influence migration in such a way as to maximize their profits (Salt and Steiner 1997).

8. *Increase in entry controls.* Increased migration and the vocalization of xenophobia propelled a conspicuous increase in entry controls, directed even at asylum seekers. Recent calls to change asylum laws based on the Geneva Convention system created after the Second World War—such as in Germany and the UK—highlight the increasing difficulty of separating formerly clearly identifiable refugee flows from other migrant flows. Yet these barriers to the mobility of persons are being erected by the nation-state just as its sovereignty is being undermined by other, largely celebrated, global flows: of capital, goods, ideas, images, laws.

New trends in migration theories

1. *Where classical migration theories fail.* Applied to the diverse picture of today’s migration, accepted theories of migration, which focus on the reasons for leaving or staying, may work in individual instances but offer too little to tie together the multiplicity of flows that actually interact in the life of a society. In my own fieldwork with migrants from Fujian to Europe, I found that we would not be able to understand why migrants move in the ways they do if we had not seen all major settings and major actors in the social and economic space a migrant moves in. (The former here include China and the destination country, and often transit countries or countries where the migrant’s relatives live; the latter, persons regulating or facilitating migration at both end, family members, employees and employers.) This is particularly so since the same family’s recently migrated members are often found in different countries. Even for such traditional migrant homelands as Fujian, the concept of **chain migration**, which pictures migration as a product of socialization and collective economic dependence, is almost never sufficient to explain individual choices of migration strategies. Such strategies are made from a wider range and on the basis of more information than before.

2. *New approaches to migration.* Demographers and geographers such as Kritz, Lim, and Zlotnik (1992) and Skeldon (1997) retained the term “migration” in a restricted sense but attempted to reestablish a holistic picture of migration by placing it within a larger picture of movements and networks thereby transcending the binaries of outward and

return migration, sending and host country. They introduced the term "migration system" to describe aggregate connections through migration between one or more places of origin with one or more places of destination. Anthropologists like Pieke (1999) took a similar approach, but instead of describing migration from the perspective of the outside observer, they attempted to describe the social reality that migrants themselves operate in. Instead of asking "what migration does, or how it comes about, or how it is structured," this cultural approach to migration "is concerned with how migratory experiences are tied into the web of ongoing discourses of belonging, separation, and achievement," power, nationalism, and transnationalism. Pieke proposed the term "migration configuration" to encompass the movements of people, information, goods, money and other resources between the two or more loci of a transnational community, but also the institutions and networks supporting such flows and the niches carved out by migrants.

A migration configuration could include "kinship and community ties, formal immigration barriers and commercial human traffickers, state agencies and individual officials, the configuration of ethnic groups migrants encounter, airlines, railways and shipping companies, and even law firms, human rights groups, and anti-immigration activists." In this approach, a phenomenon such as chain migration is explained not only in structural terms but also in terms of the "culture of migration" in the sending community that inculcates in its members a particular discourse of movement and achievement. Pieke argues that this cultural approach "makes it possible again to look at migration ... in its own right rather than just as an adjunct of, say, the inequalities of the world economic system, modernization, or simply the workings of the national or international labor market."

3. *Problematic categories.* Taking a contextualized, ethnographic view to migration, the problematic nature of certain commonly operationalized categories becomes obvious. This causes not only a conceptual problem but also a data-collection one, as governments and international organizations maintain the old, rigid boundaries between categories of people who move, with mostly incompatible databases. Where lies the dividing line between a migrant and a traveler, a legal and an illegal migrant, a political and an economic migrant, a migrant and a refugee, an individual and a chain migrant, push and pull factors? Reality has become more complex than to fit into these categories. Let us take a "permanent resident" in a foreign country who spends half of his time in the home country and in third countries, a "foreign investor" who gains that status in his home country after only a few months of residence abroad, and a "tourist" who only makes short trips abroad but maintains a business network there. Is the distinction between them a useful one? Is someone who has crossed a border legally but had paid to obtain an invitation letter a legal or an illegal migrant? What about one who legally purchased a Dominican passport under that country's "economic citizenship" scheme and moved with it to the US? Is someone who goes abroad both to make money and to evade a regime of truth (Foucault) imposed upon her a political or an economic migrant or neither? Both voluntary and involuntary migration is characterized by a combination of compulsion and choice. Both "migrants" and "refugees" are motivated by a mixture of fears, hopes, and aspirations, and often follow the same routes and are in constant contact with each other en route and at the destination.

Movements of different type and duration, often determined by expediency, may look different from the standpoint of national statistics but create very similar transnational social spaces. Indeed, the cultural and economic significance of tens or hundreds of thousands of summer language students in Australia or Britain for either the sending or the host country has much in common with that of labor migrants. Likewise, so-called "astronauts," Hong Kong businessmen who deposit their families in Canada but spend most of

their time in Hong Kong and China doing business, are no less “migrants” in anthropological and economic terms than if they had stayed in Canada. The same goes for the peripatetic Chinese in Eastern Europe, for whom it is hard to define a country of residence, or even for those who reside in China but come to Europe several times a year for business and tourist visits.

While European and North American (and Asian) governments have come full circle from treating boat people from China as refugees fleeing to freedom to dismissing them as economic migrants abusing the system, it is clear that such a shift owes more to political expediency than to the feelings of the migrants themselves. Indeed, officials in sending states have been more realistic in abandoning these binaries—not just for their political expediency but also because they did not grow up with the UN’s migration paradigm. Chinese government figures published on “new migrants,” reflecting a more holistic view of migration, generally put together those who have left on student visas and work contracts with those who have left on family-sponsored or investor immigrant visas as well as with illegal migrants. Recently, an important paper by Jeff Crisp (1999) of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) appeared, showing that UN is beginning to question its categories. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) seems more conservative on the matter.

In keeping with the move towards transnational studies, scholars now think more at the supranational scale. They think in terms of groups that can be thought of as translocal, transnational, or diasporic, rather than as migrants. It is a different set of questions, about how these people relate to their homelands, what kinds of ties, exchanges, networks, and ongoing movements are taking place between their places of residence and places of origin.

In some ways, this is a reflection of what has been happening to diasporas in the later part of the 20th century. There is much greater access to transport, mobility, and communication, so there is a potential for groups to be connected supranationally, whereas in the past migration would have been a one-time move. In the past people might have written some letters home, or later they might have sent an audio cassette home, but they certainly wouldn’t have kept moving back and forth and calling on the telephone and creating the much more elaborate supranational organizations that they do now.

Appadurai writes, “neither popular nor academic thought in this country has come to terms with the difference between being a land of immigrants and being one node in a postnational network of diasporas” (Appadurai 1996: 171). This quote is significant not only because of the shift in scholarship but also because it reflects the ways in which American scholarship might have been particularly conditioned by the idea of America as the prime desirable destination for migrants and by the idea of America as not building its nationalism on an ancient history but rather on a sense of identity that’s about everyone being immigrants. Focusing on “immigration” is another way of emphasizing the receiving society; it is about people coming in. Instead, we now hear more about networks of diasporas, and about America being one switch point for mobile populations.

Appadurai talks about “the seductiveness of a plural belonging, of becoming American while staying somehow diasporic, of an expansive attachment to an unbounded

fantasy space” (Appadurai 1996: 170). And here again, he describes something that is not just happening in scholarly conceptions but also in the experiences of migrants. Becoming American may be part of what their experiences are about, but not necessarily the ultimate goal. A transnational, supranational identity that includes the homeland and the networks with the homeland and diaspora communities in other countries becomes a greater goal than it might have been in the past. “Unbounded” is a very carefully chosen term here because it refers to the political border being less significant to your possibilities, to your sense of who you are. “Fantasy” is also highly significant because it denotes that political borders are in fact still more important than they may be imagined to be.

Migrants and transnational projects

Basch, Glick Schiller, and Szanton Blanc’s concept of transnationalism refers to discourses and practices anchored in more than one nation-state. In *Nations Unbound*, Linda Basch, Nina Glick Schiller, and Cristina Szanton Blanc write, “often through the use of symbols, language and political rituals, migrants and political leaders in the country of origin are engaged in constructing an ideology that envisions migrants as loyal citizens of their ancestral nation-state (Glick Schiller et al. 1994: 3).”

This again is a very big shift: the idea of citizenship as not necessarily singular and exclusive; that migrants could be citizens some place other than where they live and also potentially could be citizens where they are living. We are not really talking about a political designation any more. We are talking again about the idea, just as we talked about the idea of “nationness” no longer necessarily being tied to a political unit. Here we are talking about an idea of citizenship. Somebody might have a formal citizenship, but they might also think about themselves as citizens of another country. So we are also talking about a form of subjectivity.

In many cases, we can still talk about a one-time move between one place and another. But much of the scholarship is going beyond that notion and employs concepts like movement, flexibility, links, flows, exchanges, networks, supranational social forms. All these are ways of talking differently about migration and diaspora. It is about a network of connections, rather than a dyadic emphasis on the sending and the receiving country—or in internal migration, the home site and the receiving site—and the relation between them. It doesn’t matter whether the movement is subnational or supranational. Glick Schiller et al. write, “Today immigrants develop networks, activities, patterns of living and ideologies that span their home and the host society” (Glick Schiller et al. 1994: 4). But the notion of network or supranational social form is not defined by the optics of sending and receiving. “Rather than fragmented social and political experiences, these activities spread across state boundaries and seem to constitute a single field of social relations” (Glick Schiller et al. 1994: 5). So dyadic becomes single. And again you are at the level of the transnation, where it is not the relations between two states and what the migrants do between them that define it, but a single field of social relations.

Glick Schiller, Basch, and Szanton Blanc on the deterritorialized nation-state

in Basch et al. 1994: pp. 269–270.

To conceive of a nation-state that stretches beyond its geographic boundaries involves a social fabrication different from diasporic imaginings. To see oneself in a Diaspora is to imagine oneself as outside a territory, part of a population exiled from a homeland. In counterdistinction is the deterritorialized nation-state, in which the nation's people may live anywhere in the world and still live not outside of the state. By this logic there is no longer a Diaspora because wherever its people go, their state goes too.

The state controls a territorial homeland and operates within the "community" of states. However, a large sector of its "citizens," perhaps even a majority, live their lives within other states to which they may come to belong in the sense of having legalized residency, naturalization, or birth. The national leadership of these deterritorialized nation-states claim their dispersed populations as "citizens," because the members of their Diasporas conduct economic, political, social and cultural transactions that are essential for the maintenance of the home state's survival.

Glick Schiller et al. "define 'transnationalism' as the processes by which immigrants forge and sustain multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement" (1994: 7).

Discussion on the meaning of "postnational" and "transnational"

Nyiri: "Postnational" refers to the emergence of real alternatives to the nation-state, not to the end of the nation-state. The nation is not gone. It is obviously there. It is alive. And, in fact, people will say that in these new transnational forms, the nation can sometimes become stronger. The state doesn't relinquish that appeal to the nation: a deterritorialized notion of the nation can continue appealing to people, they can strengthen the nation, and they can strengthen the state.

A Chinese student in our course asked why we insist on using the term "nation-state." It's wrong, she said, to call China a nation-state, because it is a multinational state. One level of this question is semantic, especially when you consider the problem of what *minzu* means in Chinese: it means both "nation" and "nationality" and also "ethnic" or "ethnicity." But there is also another level to the question. The point is that the nation-state is not just an analytical category; it is also a legal and political category, it is the subject of international law. States believe that they have sovereignty over their nationals and these people constitute a nation. What we are talking about is when alternative affiliations of people erode this national sovereignty. Either because they are affiliated with several states or because they are affiliated with collectivities that are not states at all.

It is the latter case that I would call cosmopolitanism. People say: I am not a Hungarian, give me a break, I am an anthropologist. I don't care where I was born. There are religious organizations—I guess the most commonly cited would be certain Islamic religious groups that have great international networks—that are organized purely along the lines of religion. For example the famous insurgent commander Emir Khattab in Chechnya—nobody cares or even knows where he is from. It doesn't matter.

As to the term "transnationalism," people who come out of the Basch – Glick Schiller tradition, generally use some definition based on theirs: "the processes by which immigrants forge and sustain multistranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement" (Basch et al. 1994: 7). Transnationalism in this view is a process that does not discard national categories but uses them flexibly. When I am in Hungary, I am, say, Chinese. It is important for me that this is the Chinese national holiday, I will participate in their festivals, I will go and watch their videos. But when I go back to China, I will say all the time: sorry, your rules don't apply to me, because we in Hungary or in America don't do this kind of things. Transnationalism is this kind of multiple attachment when you continuously, depending on the situation, make use of different national symbols.

Duara: Arjun Appadurai wrote his article in 1992, although it was published in 1993, and Basch et al.'s book in 1994. So there is a succession. Basch et al. clarified the use of the terms to some extent, but even there, there is a lot of confusion.

The problem with postnationalism is that there is a real (not just a theoretical) issue involved. What do we mean when we say nationalism? Because of our historical experience of nationalism with the territorial state, we tend to think that unless a phenomenon is bounded off territorially it cannot be a national phenomenon. So you can talk about it as postnationalism or transnationalism. But the fact of the matter is that nationalism has an ideology of bonding, which is theoretically separate from territorial boundary. Though, of course, in recent history most of the bonding has been by putting soldiers on boundaries. Premodern societies did not invest so much money in those boundaries or frontier zones. If we think of closure, of closing your own group off to the outside, as fundamental to nationalism, then what we see today is not postnationalism at all. It can be in fact a second version of nationalism.

In my book *Rescuing History from the Nation* (Duara 1995) I talked about the closing-off process as creating hard boundaries in place of soft boundaries. In premodern societies you had a lot of soft boundaries and people could have multiple identifications, sometimes they could be, for certain purposes, they could be, say, Muslim or Christian. What nationalism tended to do was create a single, supreme loyalty. Deterritorialized nationalism has a different reality from territorial nation, i.e. people in deterritorialized nations actually live in different places, they deal with different types of people, and necessarily feel the impact of all these different situations. So there is the opportunity for reopening, for turning hard boundaries into soft boundaries. In other words, the technology and the potential for hard boundaries to exist continue, but there is also new potential for soft boundaries.

Glick Schiller et al. are doing similar things as Appadurai, but they have a special emphasis on figuring the nation-state in relation to migrants. They are interested in how that nation-state relates to people who are not living in the political state. And the nation that spans the political boundary of the origin state becomes very important to them. They write:

De-territorialized nation-state building is ... a form of post-colonial nationalism that reflects and reinforces the division of the entire globe into nation-states. ... To see oneself in a diaspora is to imagine oneself as being outside a territory, part of a population exiled from a homeland. ... In counterdistinction is the de-territorialized nation-state, in which the nation's people may live anywhere in the world and still not live outside the state (Glick Schiller et al. 1994: 269).

This, in some ways, is playing a word-game, because of course we are talking about the political states as territories; so if you migrate, you must live outside the state. What the authors are talking about is a kind of deterritorialized state. It is a kind of ideological reformulation that allows people to be a sort of citizen even though they live outside the territory. And if they can be thought of as citizens, then all sorts of claims can be made on them, for political loyalty or economic contributions and remittances. What the authors are talking about is nation-states making an ideological move to claim migrants as continuing to be part of the states. This is very different from the grassroots, unofficial, nonstate organizations that Appadurai talked about—Habitat for Humanity or Queer Nation. In his case we are talking about transnational organizations that are distinct from states. Here we are talking about a situation where the states themselves are trying to bring migrants back into the definition of who the state is.

Discussion on transnational politics

Nyiri: An extreme example is one recently related by Luis Guarnizo, another prominent scholar of transnationalism. In the United States in the early 2000s there have been several laws regularizing illegal immigrants from Central America, particularly the Salvadoreans. According to Guarnizo, the Salvadorean government basically assisted Salvadorean migrants to the US in claiming asylum, because for Salvador, as for many countries, migrant remittances are one of the largest economic inflows. And to a lesser extent, the Chinese state is certainly also doing this, because when there are Chinese people coming to Europe to claim asylum, on the one hand of course the Chinese state says that they are not true refugees, they are not persecuted, but on the other hand, it puts the blame not on the migrants themselves these days, but on the receiving states for having lax immigration policies. And when official delegations come to Europe, they sometimes visit these people who claim asylum on the basis they are persecuted by those very authorities. So I think this process of ideological forgetting that Louisa Schein is describing is accelerating. It is another aspect of **time-space compression**. And sometimes such acceleration actually results in a qualitative change, because, after all, human lifespan is limited. Something that happens very quickly within one person's career is different from it happening over a period of decades.

Anna Urbanska (student): In the Tibetan diaspora in India, there are many people who have never seen Tibet. They live in India and imagine their Tibetan homeland that is very important in constituting their identity. Simultaneously many of them have links with people who sponsor them. Organizations supporting Tibet arrange for individuals to sponsor Tibetan children. This creates links with the US, Germany, and so on. What is the most important in that situation? How to conceptualize the space these migrants, who see themselves as a classical diaspora unable to go back home, live in?

Schein: My research on the Hmong from Laos shows a similar situation. Many Hmong, after having fled Laos during the Vietnam War, have spent time in camps in Thailand, which in refugee language is called the second country. And the third country is where they live today. In some ways India could be thought of that way, because people came out of Tibet and settled there with the idea that they would go on somewhere else but in fact many didn't. And that is true in Thailand with the Hmong as well: they came out of Laos, they never got approval from the UN High Commissioner for Refugees to go abroad,

they never got accepted to a third country, so they settled in Thailand. Now there is another generation of children that is growing up in Thailand. It is not the homeland but it becomes the home country. I don't know if you want to call it a triple loyalty, or if you really start to want to talk about supranational social formations that also connect them to Tibetans who had already migrated to third countries. So you got a very complex linkage.

In response to your question, another thing that happens is that the idea of exile is maintained longer than it is relevant. A lot of Hmong in Southeast Asia still have antipathy toward China, where their original, ancestral homeland lies. They have been out of China for many, many generations, but they hate China because China drove them away. And they are repelled by China because in Southeast Asia they fought Communism, and they still see China as a Communist regime. Even though they start to travel to China, they even invest money to help their coethnics within China, they still have this notion that China is a place of political exile.

So in parallel to forgetting, there is also the resilience of the notion of exile. And I would imagine a similar thing going on in Tibetans in India, with their notions of homeland—both loved and hated.

Glick Schiller et al. give examples where a state lays claim even to those migrants who had left as refugees or exiles, because of some political conflict with those states. In many cases, the historical process that could be described as ideological forgetting takes place, in which, after a period of time, that form of the nation comes to supersede the political conflict that had pushed those people out. Certainly this has happened with many Chinese migrants, who had thought of themselves as anti-Communist, and then after the economic reforms were able to think of themselves as supporting the new economic regime and therefore able to be nationalists again. In this case, “Chineseness” came to supersede political conflict.

Minorities and subnational identities

Ethnically complex sending states

Many discussions of migration assume a one-to-one correspondence between the cultural identity of migrant or diaspora peoples and the cultural identity of a homeland. This homeland is routinely described in the terminology of the nation-state. In other words, you can talk unreflexively about the Philippines and the Philippine diaspora, or Haiti and the Haitian diaspora. But the situation is not as simple as that. This way of thinking assumes that migrants come from a place where their people have a sovereign state, and people who migrate go through the process of becoming minorities from being a majority in their home nation. However, there are also people who were minorities in their country of origin and are traveling as minorities. These are the ones I am going to be talking about next.

Likewise, sending states themselves often are complex multiethnic states. When we talk about the Chinese diaspora, does it include Tibetans, Miao, or Mongolians? China has 56 official *minzu* or “nationalities.” It includes the Han, who account for 92% of the population, and 55 *shaoshu minzu*, “minority nationalities,” such as Tibetans, Koreans, Dai, and many peoples in the southwest.

Dikötter on minzu

Many terms were proposed by early 20th-century Chinese reformers and then revolutionaries to mean "race" and "nation," but the ones that stuck were *zhongzu* and *minzu* respectively. *Minzu* is often translated as "nationality." I would say that the meaning depends on the context. In the revolutionary context, *Han minzu* is a race or a nationality, which is distinct not only by culture, territory, or history, but by the blood that flows through its veins, up to the Yellow Emperor.

When we talk about notions of race in China we have got to bear in mind that in China and in many other countries, perhaps not so much in Germany, notions of race were seen as not just physical but a package of physical and cultural. A *minzu* has an ancestor, a territory, a history, a culture. Culture may change. Territory may be lost. History may be suppressed. But the blood, the ancestry does not change.

It is interesting that the ethnic composition of China is sometimes quite absent from Chinese studies. Yet, I expect the *shaoshu minzu* share to go up because overall, minorities are allowed more children than the Han, and because of other benefits, such as special quotas in higher education, can make it advantageous to belong to a minority.

Dikötter on family planning benefits for minorities

By law, ethnic minorities are allowed to have more than one child, while the Han are normally allowed only one. But you have to be very careful to see how this is actually implemented. There is of course good research on the one-child policy. A number of books and articles have been published on how it is being implemented in this part or that part of China. Quite clearly, the government wishes to see itself as giving extra allowances to minorities, but the information that comes out e.g. from Tibet is really controversial.

And there is another problem. If you actually consider the one-child policy separately from the emphasis on eugenics, you are missing a crucial aspect. If you are Hui (a Chinese Muslim), for example, you should be able to have more than one child, but the Chinese authorities view endogamic marriages in a very critical light, and they accuse Hui people of marrying within the same village. They may, on the one hand, be allowed to have more than one child, but with the eugenic clause on the other hand, they may not be allowed to reproduce.

Latent multiethnicity within the Han

Many scholars doing Chinese studies in the West also talk about multiethnicity within the Han. This "latent" multiethnicity becomes more explicit in migration. People come from different dialect groups, different regions; they are identified as Hakka or Shang-hainese, and even among Han migrants, regional dialect and ethnic designations make a difference.

Dikötter on the ethnic continuum within and beyond the Han

To us now it seems very clear who is a Han and who is a Manchu. But human beings, being what they are, don't wait for some government approval to move from one part of the country to another, intermarry, or have children. If you just look at the old heartland of Manchuria, these borders have been open for centuries. In other words, somebody classified as Han and somebody classified as Manchu may speak the same dialect, eat the same food, pray to the same god, and share the same economic niche. They may not have that much difference. On the other hand, if you take the same sort of person classified as Han in the north of China and near the Vietnam border, the differences in food, in dialect, in local gods may be quite big. What I am saying here is that the "Han" is an artificial construct.

The Tibetans

But ethnic differences are especially important for minorities. There is a different politics and consciousness that they travel with if they are coming from the sending state as a minority population.

Tibet is, for several reasons, an untypical example for China. One of the reasons is that Tibet is such a clear territory. Although the boundaries of Tibet are contested, boundaries continue to be drawn, and the Tibetan homeland is something that is talked about. By contrast, many of the minorities in China do not have a notion of a clear territory that could be distinguished from that of China. On the other hand, the Tibetan case is interesting, because it is a group whose minority identity has been politicized to the point of the supranational organization being very important. For some, this has meant opposing China politically from within Tibet. But there are also many living in Tibet who consider themselves Chinese citizens at the same time.

There are a few processes in the politicization of Tibetan identity that are very important to note. One of them is that it is not only Tibetans overseas who are involved in this supranational mobilization. Many Western organizations are also involved. So this particular movement is a combination of ethnic organization and Appadurai's idea of transnational organizations that are based not on one's own ethnic identity. The Tibetan independence movement has members with multiple nationalities or ethnicities in addition to Tibetans. And because of that multinational character of the movement, it has a much greater impact and can generate greater pressure on the Chinese state.

The Miao

Another example is the Miao people, the fifth-largest minority in China, scattered over about ten provinces in the south and southwest. In the 1990 census, they numbered 7 and a half million.

I was in college when I started working on these people. I was interested in their cultural identity as migrants. I started from a very migration-studies perspective, and it was the Hmong refugees in America that said to me that if I wanted to really understand their culture, I should go to China. At that time, Hmong Americans didn't have money or citizenship documentation to go back to China themselves, so I went to

China before any Hmong Americans had gone. It was because of my different citizenship, my different political status within the American state that I was able to do that, but it was at *their* suggestion.

Miao is the official term for this people within the Chinese polity. And within the Miao there are multiple dialect groups, just the way there is Cantonese, Shanghaiese and Mandarin (*putonghua*). Within the Miao there are dialect groups that are mutually unintelligible. They cannot speak to each other in their own language. They have been separated for centuries in different parts of China. But they are designated by linguistic and historical researchers as one ethnic group.

Some people will debate that and say they should be considered different ethnic groups. But, at any rate, this Miao category has been in place for forty-some years now and has a lot of legitimacy within China.

One of the dialect groups of the Miao people migrated out of China in the 19th–20th century into northern Southeast Asia and settled in Vietnam, Laos, Thailand, and Burma. In their own dialect, members of this migrant group call themselves “Hmong.” Many of those living in Laos were recruited by the CIA in the Vietnam War. One of the reasons why they were willing to be recruited was their minority status in Laos. They hoped that they would improve their situation within Laos by allying themselves with a foreign superpower.

There are many Miao in China who also use the term Hmong in their own language. But they are only about one third of the total Miao population. So Hmong only refers to a part of this larger Miao category.

And this is a politically very sensitive subject. Hmong outside China have been criticizing me for twenty years for using the term Miao, because they feel this term has been imposed by the Chinese. Historically, the word Miao in Chinese had a much broader meaning; it included many other minorities.

The problem is that *within* China the Miao people are much more complex. And then you get into questions of: is it a multiethnic group? If there are different dialects, are we really talking about different ethnicities, different *minzu*, or do we agree with the Chinese research in the 1950s that officially established the Miao category? This research is often critiqued as merely a state imposition of policy. It is noteworthy that many of the Chinese researchers were minorities themselves. Beijing would send native speakers of various Miao dialects to work on their own people’s languages and histories.

Regardless of whether that research is ultimately reliable, what I found in my fieldwork was that by the 1980s and 1990s the term “Miao” had a lot of legitimacy. The Miao that I know in China use the term “Miao” and do not think of it as a racist or discriminative term. This is the historical process of political-linguistic change. One of the things I try to show in my writing is that imposing the Hmong term from outside makes people from other dialect groups within Miao invisible.

The acceptance of the Miao umbrella category has had very strong economic ramifications because, to the extent the Miao elites are represented politically, they can make claims on the state. They can say, we have seven million peasants, why doesn’t the central state put more money into economic development for our people? But I don’t agree with many political science interpretations that say the Miao is a category

they have adopted simply because this is an instrument for them to be accommodated within the state. I think it has a much broader significance for them.

The Hmong outside China nowadays visit the mainland regularly. Cultural classes are offered in China for diaspora Hmong that come back. I met a group of them in Guiyang. They had stayed in Guiyang at the university there and been taken to Miao villages. Miao in Guiyang mostly don't speak the Hmong dialect. And the visitors said "We were so disappointed because we couldn't speak to the people." They were trying to find their roots but they had a great many linguistic and cultural frustrations. Hmong American visitors also strongly dislike hearing the term Miao, since they interpret it as a derogatory term. But at the same time, they want to make connections with people who call themselves Miao but not Hmong.

Some of the Miao who don't speak the Hmong dialect have recently tried to learn to speak so that they can communicate with the Hmong abroad and so they can host them better and can make them more comfortable, because the Hmong from abroad do not want to deal with Chinese and English. They have a very strong minority consciousness, and they feel that having to use Chinese and English to communicate indicates their people's being oppressed by dominant cultures. They want a direct connection with their coethnics.

This is what I have called oppositional cosmopolitanism (Schein 1998). Minorities everywhere want to be able to circumvent the majorities—the Chinese, the Americans, or whoever—and be able to have that transnational but also subnational link. The language question is really important and very frustrating for them.

A lot of change has happened since the 1990s when the Hmong started going back. One of them is a shift in the costumes. Costumes, unlike language, is not a sensitive subject, and the Miao in China were able to import a lot of costumes typical of Hmong outside China. Many young women are changing their styles to styles of other dialect groups, and that doesn't really bother them.

But when the Hmong cannot make their language intelligible, it is deeply frustrating, because it challenges their sense of identity. They are looking for roots, for cultural authenticity; instead, they find these complex differences.

Two things to note about the complex situation of the Hmong, who have been a minority at all stages of their migrations. The Hmong in the West have multiple homelands. They have Laos, which is the country they came from. (Almost no Hmong in the West come from Thailand or Vietnam or Burma, because it is specifically the US employment of Hmong in Laos as part of the secret war that produced political refugees, and these are the ones that were allowed to immigrate to the US.) So they are very interested in Lao politics, and go back and forth to Laos all the time now. They also go back to Thailand, because many spent time in Thailand in refugee camps, and many of their people from Laos still remain there. Thailand is not really a homeland, but it is a source of cultural roots and cultural recovery. And then they also have this very fraught, complex connection to China.

The second point to note is about the concept of oppositional cosmopolitanism. I have actually retreated from this idea, and I am not sure that I still agree with it. But the idea was that if we are talking about people who are minorities everywhere, who don't have a sovereign state that they can appeal to as a homeland, then there is a connection between subnational and supranational identities that can potentially produce

a kind of empowerment for these people who feel marginal, excluded, oppressed, or discriminated against by their home states, whether in China, the US, Southeast Asia, or the Western European countries.

These connections are created not only through travel, because only a few Hmong are actually traveling back and forth to Asia, but also through the production of all kinds of networks of communications, media, and economic exchanges. Economic exchanges are very important, because Miao in China feel—and most of them are—very marginal to economic reforms, and they are not getting rich. They see the opportunity to connect with their people in the West, who by their standards are very rich, as a way to improve their economic position in China.

When I talked about oppositional cosmopolitanism—or oppositional transnationalism—I wanted to think about it not necessarily as a political consciousness or a mobilization against particular states. These connections are taking place legally within states, and the Chinese state is actually very happy to have Hmong from the West donate money and invest in Miao projects. It is rather the potential effect of these supranational connections that I wanted to emphasize. As I wrote,

I suspect that ethnographies attentive to multilocal linkages will turn up a great deal of subterranean activity which may not name itself as activism, may not focus around oppositionality, but may in fact have the effect of subverting the constraints of the territorially based state. As ethnographers, then, and interpreters of ethnographic data, let us attend not only to resistance per se but to oppositionality as an effect of translocal practices—especially those practices concerned with identity production (Schein 1998: 293).

In some ways I was reacting here to Appadurai talking about very organized and conscious movements like the Greens or Habitat for Humanity, and I was thinking that there should be another way to formulate oppositionality. In this formulation, minorities would simply be circumventing the constraints placed on them by their respective states. We are not talking about Miao and Hmong organizing themselves like the Tibetans, in a very antistate organization. But the social, economic, or political consequences of Hmong and Miao having transnational linkages could have the effect of improving their position within the states of their residence, politically or economically or even culturally.

The Chinese state is in a peculiar position vis-à-vis the Hmong Americans, because these are not migrants out of China, except that they had quietly crossed the border several decades or centuries ago. The big migration, the one that has political significance now, happened out of Laos to the West. China is in an ambivalent position because it wants to treat Hmong migrants just like overseas Chinese, *huaqiao*, who might come back and invest in their homeland and help the economy. But at the same time, it is sometimes apprehensive that overseas Hmong, like Tibetans, might be a political threat in some way. The Miao who want to go abroad from China never know whether they get an exit visa or not, because sometimes the Chinese state sees their ties as politically dangerous, and at other times as politically or economically advantageous.

Li Anshan on whom China now considers as the “minority overseas Chinese”

Li Anshan on “Ethnic Minority Overseas Chinese” (Ethnic Minority Huaqiao and Huaren, EMHH)

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This text is an unchanged excerpt from Li's paper *A Survey of the Study on Huaqiao-Huaren in PRC (1950–2000)—With Reference to the Study on Ethnic Minority Huaqiao-Huaren*, presented at the Migrating Identities and Ethnic Minorities in Chinese Diaspora seminar at the Centre for the Study of the Chinese Southern Diaspora, Australian National University, 26–28 September, 2001. It gives a picture of the increasingly wide scope of the notion of “overseas Chinese.”

EMHH: the Criterion

Who are the Chinese? The Chinese are not only the Han; the Chinese are a nation including 56 nationalities (ethnic groups), the Han is one of them. Who are the EMHH? Tan Tianxing once outlined a definition: “All the ancestors of the Chinese minority living within China who have migrated outside of China can be called Chinese minority Huaqiao (if they maintain their citizenship of China) and Huaren (if they have obtained the citizenship of other countries).” But how can we identify the EMHH? What is the criterion? Xiang Dayou also made it clear that the EMHH have two criteria: their Chinese origin and their emigration to the present state after its founding. Tan's statement is clear only as a definition while Xiang's criterion is important but not enough. We need more to identify the EMHH. A tentative criterion of the EMHH is listed below. In my opinion, the criterion should contain five elements: Records, Origins, Objective, Time and Subjective. This criterion of ROOTS would help us to identify the EMHH.

Record

There must exist some kind of historical record to indicate that the ethnic minority group is originally from China; in other word, they belong to an ethnic group either originally from China or living in China now. There are three kinds of Record:

1. Oral Record, such as oral history, oral literature or oral tradition, ethnic poems or folklores, etc.
2. Textual Record, such as books, annals, Jiapu (family history), Zupu (lineage history), etc.
3. Structure Record. It has at least four aspects: belief (religious belief, social values, etc.), social structure, productive style and life artifacts (tools, tombs, gravestone, etc).

Record is very important to identify the EMHH.

Origin

There must be evidence to indicate that the members of the group are the descendants of the Chinese. This element is comprised of two major factors:

1. Home Town. Their hometown or home village is in a certain place in China. The group should know that place either through oral tradition, family history or some records.

2. Migration route. They should know the way of their migration. Some of them may have not directly migrated from China, but through other country (or countries).

Origin usually has to be supported by the Record.

Objective Chinese

There should be certain signs or cultural symbols that indicate the ethnic group are Chinese, and their ancestors used to live in China. The most important here is that they should keep some elements of Chinese culture.

1. Keep their language. They still speak the same language of the related ethnic group in China; or their dialect is identical with or similar to that language.

2. Keep Chinese names and signs. They keep some signs of their home village by means of their names, the names of their group, communities, roads, streets, residential areas, etc.

3. Retain Chinese customs. They still have festivals or social activities similar to the ethnic group in China, keep their customs of home village, etc.

Time of the Migration

The time of the migration is very important. The group must have moved to the present country (or location) only after the founding of the state there. We cannot consider the origin of an ethnic group as Chinese without time limit. Before the state was founded, although the ethnic group have the same origin as the one in China, they are indigenous, neither "immigrants" nor "overseas" (or "overlands" for that matter). Therefore, they do not belong to ethnic minority Huaqiao-Huaren. Only after the founding of the state, the new comers had to either ask for permission from the polity to settle down; or fight with the aborigines for the right to settle down. They are real immigrants, and can be regarded as EMHH.

Subjective Chinese

The group should willingly claim they are descendants of Chinese. This can be shown through different ways.

1. Be aware or even proud of their Chinese origin, willing to visit their hometown or village once a while.

2. Try to maintain the relationship with their hometown. They use various ways to express their feeling towards their hometown, try to maintain the linkage with their hometown in China (donations, investment or help in other ways), and care about the development of their hometown.

3. Consciously seek roots in China. The second or third generations still remember their ancestor's teaching and try to find or visit their hometown in China.

The five elements (Record, Origin, Objective, Time and Subjective) can be remembered by their initials "ROOTS."

EMHH: the Statistics

How many of the EMHH are there in the world? Both Xiang Dayou and Tan Tianxing have estimated that there are about 3,100,000 EMHH outside China. Some have become citizens of the countries where they have settled, some still keep their Chinese citizenship.

Through a detailed study of the literature, I found there are much more EMHH than their estimation. My calculation is that there are more than 7,000,000 EMHH all over the world.

Finally, I have to stress two points. First, the EMHH have a close linkage with so-called "cross-border ethnic groups." The two groups have common as well as different features. There are altogether more than 30 cross-border ethnic groups in China. Some of them are EMHH, some of them part of EMHH, some not EMHH. For example, the Nung, the Hmong and the Yao in Vietnam and the Zhuang, the Miao and the Yao are cross-border ethnic groups. At the same time, the Nung, the Hmong and the Yao in Vietnam are also EMHH. The Gin is an ethnic group in China, their origin is the Viets in Vietnam. They migrated from Vietnam to China as early as the 1400s. Therefore we cannot count the Viets as EMHH.

More important, the Chinese is not equal to the Han. In China, there are 56 nationalities (ethnic groups), with the Han being the biggest, accounting for 91.59% of the whole population. The ethnic minorities account 8.41 per cent. The Chinese are not only the Han. The Chinese are a people including 56 nationalities (ethnic groups). Therefore, the Huaqiao-Huaren are not only the Han Huaqiao-Huaren, they also include the ethnic minority Huaqiao-Huaren. As the above-tables show, there are altogether 7,016,027 EMHH in the world. If we add those not included in the tables either by countries or by ethnic groups, they should be about 7,100,000.

Research methods and anthropological fieldwork

The shift from migration studies to diaspora or transnational studies presents new research problems and issues of research design. What is your site? How do you territorialize your research object? How much *should* you territorialize your research?

For anthropologists, this is an especially difficult issue, because we do fieldwork. We need to be in place physically and in person, talking to people, doing **ethnography**. How do you do fieldwork on something that is multisited or that appears, from a conventional standpoint, siteless?

One of the resolutions to this problem of researching transnational or diasporic social forms has been the idea of multisite research (Marcus 1998). Instead of working on Chinese in Hungary you would work on a Chinese sending village in China and then you would track people to Hungary.

Writing about researching multilocal grassroots activism in transnational contexts, community studies specialist Michael Peter Smith used the term "polyfocality" to describe the capability of people to think and act "simultaneously at multiple scales" (Smith 1994: 25). It is like a camera lens having more than one focal point. This is another metaphor for talking about multisite research. Not always about multiple physical sites but about different levels of looking at the same process. For example, Glick Schiller et al. (1994) in *Nations Unbound* look at state practices in regard to transmigrants, but also at the practices of transmigrants.

In analyzing flows, exchanges, connections, anthropologists have become much more mobile as well. I have proposed the idea of a siteless ethnography of transnational practices. Extending the "multisite" method, such "itinerant ethnography" is a

recognition of the deterritorialized character of the cultural politics that are under examination. In this research strategy, some venues are ephemeral, constituted by transient aggregations of people, such as festivals or international meetings (see Schein 1998a), or living rooms when the VCR is turned on. Others are mobile—such as those of videos, of video producers, or of returned migrants at a homeland site—and hence require the tracking of movements.

The difference between multisited and siteless or itinerant ethnography is that the physical location is less and less important, though we try to retain a method of face-to-face ethnography. This idea is still very controversial, at least in American anthropological method. Many people are doing it, but they always worry about funding, job prospects, their legitimacy, and colleagues' respect. It is very controversial not to have a long-term site where you can spend months and instead to go to many places. In my research on Hmong/Miao transnational ties, I've been to twenty or thirty American cities. I do **participant observation** at events or conduct interviews for a few days. And that itinerancy should be no less legitimate, because I am looking at the connections between places. I go back to places, I have long-term relationships with people. The scale at which I am working is not one local site, but a much larger, even supranational, network in which people move and communicate.

Nyiri on methodological problems of the study of transnationalism

The study of transnationalism raises methodological challenges both compared to sociological studies of migration—which typically deal with migration processes already completed—and for anthropological fieldwork. “Fieldwork”—close observation of human behavior in a particular setting—has been the hallmark of cultural anthropology. Traditionally, fieldwork meant residing some considerable length of time among the group studied and participating in their activities. As people's mobility increases and more attention is paid to studying people who move, the definitions of fieldwork are changing.

1. Tracing transnational connections requires going beyond a single site.

For example, if studying the Chinese in Hungary within the confines of Hungary's borders, one would fail to uncover the social and economic spaces of the migrants as they frequently move, trade, and communicate between Hungary and other European countries as well as China. While it still makes sense to speak of the “Chinese in Hungary” as a stable group sharing certain common characteristics, the individual members of this group are constantly replaced through an in- and outflow of persons. If we were to prepare maps of socioeconomic spaces, they would be different for each migrant. Chinese migrants resist and appropriate various local institutions, discourses and symbols in different ways in different places. To varying degrees, the same is true for all transnationals.

2. Basic underlying concepts of migration studies such as the distinction between migrant, traveler, and refugee or legal and illegal migrant have become obsolete.

Let us take a “permanent resident” in a foreign country who spends half of his time in the home country and in third countries, a “foreign investor” who gains that status in his home country after only a few months of residence abroad, and a “tourist” who only makes short trips abroad but maintains a business network there. Is the distinction between them a useful one? This is not only a conceptual problem but also a data-collection one,

as governments and international organizations maintain the old, rigid boundaries between categories of people who move, with mostly incompatible databases. Movements of different type and duration, often determined by expediency, may look different from the standpoint of national statistics but create very similar transnational social spaces.

3. Most quantitative data collected by national authorities reflect only part of migration processes and may be misleading

because (1) they use irrelevant criteria, such as household registration or residence of a half year, in defining whom to count as a migrant, and (2) they are unreliable. Figures on illegal migrant flows used by law enforcement and international migration agencies often circulate from publication to publication for years without changing, while the real situation is in rapid flux. On the other hand, useful quantitative data samples may come from unexpected corners. For example, asylum application data provide a good sample of migrants from Zhejiang and Fujian Provinces of China to Europe if one accepts qualitative findings that there is no separation between so-called legal and illegal migratory flows within that group. Solicitors or NGOs often maintain databases of asylum applicants that run into the thousands, and contain more information, for example, on place of origin or family relations than official statistics.

4. While anthropology is increasingly embracing the study of texts, this is particularly necessary in the case of transnationalism.

Migrants now often articulate their experiences, create public discourses of belonging and write their own history in an array of printed and broadcast media after they have migrated. In addition to a partly intentional process of identity construction and history writing, these media report on business opportunities, amnesties for illegal aliens, and other factors that influence migration and investment flows. Only ten years after the beginning of Chinese migration to Hungary, eight Chinese periodicals are published in Budapest, four novels and two nonfiction accounts have been written and two television serials created by migrants on their experiences in Hungary. Through such media and personal networks, a Chinese in Latin America is informed of amnesties for illegal immigrants in Italy early enough to be able to go there to benefit from them.

American anthropologists are very concerned to be distinguished from sociologists, who might go to some place doing interviews for two weeks and then write something. For American anthropologists, that long-term engagement is crucial for their sense of professional identity. I can draw on twenty years of doing research with Hmong in the West and in China. It is cumulative and long-term, but also ephemeral or episodic. Mobility is not just a convenience; it is the most appropriate method to

research the kinds of mobilities and linkages that are being made. Spending a continuous amount of time in one place is in some ways almost against the idea of trying to research the connections between them. But sometimes an event or a festival happens, and I cannot be there. Then I have to use what I call traces: interviews with people afterwards and promotional materi-

What does Schein mean by "itinerant ethnography"? Does it differ from "multisite research"? What are the methodological implications of these terms? How are findings affected by such approaches?

als or documentation of the event. I don't go to the Chinese culture classes that are offered for Hmong from America in China, but I do read the texts and see how the Miao in China are promoting these activities to the Hmong from abroad. I also have a major project of collecting, watching, and interpreting videos that Hmong Americans are making about Asia. I cannot go along with every Hmong who takes a camera to Asia and makes a documentary or a story, but I do watch the videos and interview the producers.

Media in research on transnationalism

Cultural representation may be embodied with living people, or it may be mediated. Media are so powerful because they circulate so much further than their producers.

Attention to media in research on nationalism goes back to Benedict Anderson and, before him, Karl Deutsch (see Deutsch 1961). There is a tendency to assume that media is a newly important thing, that it has become important with the rise of satellite broadcasting and instantaneous, electronic forms of communication.

Anderson's Imagined Communities
see pp. 5–6

There obviously has been an explosion in the last few decades. There is **time-space compression**; an increasing number of people depend on instant access to media (cell phones, Internet). This means not just instantaneity but that there is much less importance of face-to-face contact, because media can create bridges that were not nearly so easy to create before: you actually had to have people physically move to form a connection.

But according to Anderson's idea, which has become very influential, media was instrumental at the very inception of modern nationalism. As Appadurai writes:

Modern nationalisms involve communities of citizens and the territorially defined nation-state who share the collective experience, not of face-to-face contact or common subordination to a royal person, but of reading books, pamphlets, papers, maps, and other modern texts together. In and through these collective experiences of what Benedict Anderson calls "print capitalism" and what others increasingly see as "electronic capitalism," such as television and cinema, citizens imagine themselves to belong to a national society (Appadurai 1996: 161).

The importance of media for transnational spaces

This distinction between face-to-face contact and contact via media with other members of the community becomes even more important when you talk about transnational, global spaces. If you have media to connect people, they don't need to be face to face to think of themselves as part of a community. And it is not only because media connects people at the level of the content of what they see, hear, or read, but also because people understand themselves as consuming the same media in different places, and that practice of collective consumption also constitutes this community. Importantly, too, Anderson believes that nationalism arose through the capitalist drive

to produce newspapers and books, as part of the capitalist process of producing commodities for sale. Nationalism being promulgated by the state through the official media's discourse is a phenomenon that arose after this initial capitalist push.

The argument has been made since Anderson that many of these ideas about the way that media produces a sense of community can also be applied to transnational, supranational forms of identity.

Media is so key because it facilitates a sense of oneself that is not so tied to one's physical location. So it is not only that Hmong Americans now have coethnics on the other side of the Pacific, and then they want to see movies about them. But rather, in my argument, Hmong Americans see a lot of movies about their people in China, and then come to imagine themselves as more of a collectivity. Their subjectivity about who they are and what the global scope of their ethnic group is is actually shaped by the media that they are consuming. It is key to how they understand themselves.

Duara on the importance of who controls media

The difference between more recent times and earlier is not so much that earlier there was no visual media but who controlled the media. It was the territorial nation-state, and if you look at it, outside mature capitalist Western societies, it still is. That is the situation Karl Deutsch described. How many people could have private resources for producing this media? I think what is different now is precisely the extension of Benedict Anderson's point about media being pushed by nonstate actors: by technology and, chiefly, by the market. (There is a dialectic between technology and market, as the market also produces technology.)

The result is that media is no longer controllable by the territorial state, and all modern nation-states have to face that problem. Sometimes more acutely, as in a place like China, which wants to control it more. When the media gets market-driven, and more important in the construction of the self by virtue of its sheer quantity and spread, that makes the nationalism of this deterritorialized period more volatile, much more intense. And because it leads to a kind of decentralization of the discourse on the nation, it leads to the loss of state control over authenticity. You might say there is a loss of mystery. There is no mystery of the homeland any more when one can keep seeing pictures of the homeland: it doesn't feel like anything special. This creates a kind of emptiness. And this loss of meaning drives producers to produce more images, and then those are exhausted too, and a kind of cynicism appears. When the ideal of authenticity disappears, what are you left with? Anything is possible. You can say or do anything. That is one side of it. At the same time there is also a desire, a passion to have things mean something. This produces incredible volatility, cynicism, and ever-greater desire to have something that has mystery.

When we talk about the relevance of media to nationalism and transnationalism, we have to distinguish between official and unofficial media, elite and more amateur forms of media production. We can talk about state-sponsored newspapers and television channels, mass-circulation ones that reach the whole population. CCTV (China Central Television), for example, reaches most of the population across the Chinese territory and beyond. At the other end of the spectrum, we can talk about grassroots

amateur production of videos that circulate within the Hmong communities. Then we can add print newspapers, other types of print materials, television, DVD, movies, music cassettes, radio, and Internet.

The power of images

A final point about contemporary media is the power of images. The power of images was not there in the kind of print text that Anderson originally described as one of the vehicles by which modern nationalism arose. Many people argue that when you have an image, particularly a moving image, you have a much more powerful medium for imagination. People can transpose themselves into other spaces and other realities much more easily when there is the audiovisual effect of a movie or video.

Nyiri on the role of media in constructing the identity of "new migrants" from China

Official narratives of new migrants as patriots contributing to the development of their home country are being promoted and amplified by the media. Chinese globalization may have been relying mainly on personal communication, but is rapidly becoming mediated: in the second half of the 1990s, not only various commercial television channels but also China Central Television (CCTV) has begun broadcasting via satellite. In Hungary, nearly every Chinese I have spoken to regularly watches CCTV and Chinese Channel, the first Chinese satellite station broadcasting specifically for Europe.

Driven by higher education levels as well as greater access to news and multimedia, the growth of media run by new Chinese migrants has been much more rapid than in earlier periods. New migrant media share a remarkably standard content, style, and layout. The style of new migrant newspapers is strongly influenced by the "ideologemes" of PRC officialese. Shared layout includes the wording and positioning of and choice of fonts for titles and subtitles, the kinds of photos (ranging from protocol pictures of leaders to soft-core pornography), and so on.

New migrant media contribute to the construction of a "global Chinese" identity with shared values, raising cultural Chineseness and transnational modernity in importance above the immediate environment the reader happens to be in. By presenting a homogenized worldwide Chineseness, the papers simultaneously reproduce the Chinese/foreign dichotomy and re-"other" the foreign. Chinese and Western globalizations are pitted against each other.

In my Miao field site in China in the 1980s, there was barely any television or radio. They had a public broadcasting system via loudspeakers in the village, and people conveyed the news orally. Despite hearing these broadcasts daily, very few people had acquired standard Mandarin. But by the late 1990s, sixty or seventy percent of the households had television, and they watched movies and stories that were seductive and pleasurable. There has been an incredible change in how many Miao speak Mandarin. This is really decisive evidence of how different it is when you have consumption-oriented media that draws people in and gives them forms of pleasure that make them want to watch and identify or connect. One informant in a Miao village in China

spoke to how television becomes her way of connecting with the world: “The rich travel, the poor watch TV.” The impact of media is a case-by-case empirical question. Those cases when media is not present are really interesting comparative cases, because you can tease out other bases for collective identification in the absence of media.

Working on media as an anthropologist

Anthropologists, at least American anthropologists, have been suspicious of media. Some believe that if you work on media, you are not working on people, therefore you are not really an anthropologist; you become a literary-studies scholar. This is the big divide that American anthropologists draw between “positivist” social science research and “literary–interpretative” humanities research.

I work on Hmong movies because they are so critical to the formation of Hmong transnationalism and because they are a central part of the cultural environment for diaspora Hmong. I argue that this is good social science research even though it is on media. Video producers, entrepreneurs, sometimes just tourists from America take the camera and shoot videos and then bring them back, edit them and produce videos with covers and titles and sell them through Hmong or Asian stores or festivals or mail order. This is a huge ethnic business, and it is also a transnational practice. A few Hmong have made themselves quite a living by doing this. These videos are all in the Hmong language, so they are distributed only to Hmong in the West. People who don’t have the resources, documentation, or time to travel to Asia themselves can buy these videos and watch them. In this way they too gain a sense of being more connected to their coethnics in other places.

Production

To research media, I look at production, distribution, consumption, and the texts themselves. When I study production, I interview producers, directors, and cameramen. I pay attention to the production relations too, because they themselves are also transnational and embedded in global economics. Often a team from America goes over, and if it is not a documentary, if it is a narrative drama, they’ll hire Hmong actors in Thailand or in Laos, or have the tape edited or the soundtrack done in Laos or sometimes in China, because the labor is cheaper. They hire coethnic actors in Asia to make the production less expensive, so that they can make more profit through sales in the US. Thus, even within this Hmong transnational group, you have production relations that are structured by a global economy.

Distribution

Next, I look at distribution. I spend a lot of time in Hmong stores and at Hmong festivals talking to people about how the videos get circulated, watching people buying them and talking to people as they are talking to sellers. I track the distribution, finding out which videos are the most popular and who the audiences are. I make catalogues of individual viewers’ collections, and ask them how they acquired the ones they own.

Consumption

Then I look at consumption, watching videos with Hmong people, talking to them about the videos, finding out which age groups or other groups watch them. Sometimes I'll show Hmong viewers a clip, and we'll have long discussions about how to interpret it. Finally, I also do my own textual work, which is where many American anthropologists draw the line. I believe it is important to watch the video myself and do my own interpretations, separate from what I record from audiences. I not only recount the story lines and other objective contents, but also produce semiotic readings of the ways images and editing might work. This is related to the issue of the power of images to form subjectivities. The way images and texts are put together in a video is not necessarily straightforward; the producer has power because he can present a certain take on Hmongness or history as the authentic version.

But a producer will not say: I am manipulating my audience. You might get that level of discussion in Hollywood, but not from Hmong producers who are face-to-face with their audiences. Unlike in Hollywood, they are in constant dialogue. Viewers call the producers and say, "I liked that" or "you should change that"; they are not likely to accuse the producer of trying to manipulate them. But there is definitely an awareness of the emotional impact of Hmong identity through this experience of collective history—even though only the Hmong from Laos have that particular history. One of the most famous producers wrote a war drama, a heartbreaking story of a love that is never consummated; and he said to me that it was so compelling that if you didn't cry when you watched it you were not Hmong. In other words, the producer wants to elicit tears as a way to create a feeling of community.

Approaches to media studies

There are at least four approaches to the media as a mirror of transnational processes and transnational production of nationalism.

Can media *per se* create a collective identity? What does it need to do so: some "natural" common features, individual charisma of speakers, or some additional contact outside the media realm? What special methods are entailed in studying media?

One has to do with the way that news media affects and reflects international politics because it is a form of representation of nation-states and of political interests. The second type of approach is what Pál Nyíri does in his chapter where he looks at how a "new migrant" identity is constructed by various media. Here we look at the actual content as representation of migrant identities or experiences. The same thing could be done for national identities within China or beyond China.

The third approach, which is more relevant to social scientists who do fieldwork, includes the ethnography of the production and consumption of these texts. That is, you talk to the producer, the newspaper editor; you talk to the people who read or watch, or you watch with them. And you also talk about distribution: who reads these papers, how they get circulated.

There is a fourth approach: reflecting on our own work as texts that also contribute to the production of identities. This would be particularly salient in looking at academized texts that are commissioned by groups involved with ethnic, national, or regional identities.

State representations of identity do not necessarily coincide with what an informant says in an interview. Talking to people and observing daily lives reveal the cultural environments and subjectivities of these individuals. You get a different take from interpreting texts.

The anthropological interpretation of text

Schein on mediated transnationalism

Louisa Schein: Mediated Transnationalism and Other Elusive Objects: Anthropology, Cultural Studies and Questions of Method

In the brief space of this essay, I want to stage two relationships and to delve into their implications for anthropological ethnography. The first concerns the paradigm agonisms precipitated by the encounter of anthropology with cultural studies. These “culture wars” have been a source of much heat in recent years, of acrimonious vilifications and reciprocal otherings, and I want here to query where the fires are coming from. The second relationship is that of the much-discussed imbrication of media and transnationalism. On the one hand, I suggest that media produce forms of transnational subjectification. That is, in the consumption of media, people may develop social imaginaries and senses of community and identity that are supralocal—even when they are not mobile themselves. On the other hand, media production and circulation also generate actual transnational mobilities and new types of transnational relations. Media is never only about meanings harbored within the actual texts: media’s webs of significance are immanent in its social consequences, its relations of production, and reception as well.

Anthropology, Ethnography, Cultural Studies, Media: Some Polemics

While explications of just what the difference is between anthropology and cultural studies continue to be churned out, what I want to pursue here is what makes that difference seem unstable to me, the blurring of boundaries that has, despite proclamations to the contrary, been taking place in practice. I think anthropologists are actually doing more cultural studies than they are willing to acknowledge—what is this about? To be sure it is largely explicable as an artifact of institutional divides, of the corraling of resources, prestige and students by the literary disciplines—a process that has embittered so many anthropologists. But I think it is also about what I call the “dread textualism,” the impression on the part of anthropologists that cultural studies has favored texts, popular as they may be, privileging semiotic readings to the neglect of contextualized ethnography.

Is text to ethnography as cultural studies are to anthropology? Yet another boundary has been anxiously marked in the embattled American academy where the political-economy-inspired insights and methods of Birmingham were imported first—albeit selectively—by the literary disciplines. In English and Comparative Literature, the pressure toward textualist methods has precipitated a decided reshaping, what some would call a hijacking of what—to traffic in canonicity—could be termed the British Cultural Studies canon. There is the inevitable inertia of the disciplinary conventions that fawn over the textual

object, and there is what Stuart Hall noted some time ago already, the swift and heady institutionalization and professionalization of cultural studies in the United States which spawned all manner of careerist aspirations, of academics doing "what they think of as critical political work ... while also looking over their shoulders at the promotions, stakes and the publication stakes" (1992: 286), and often digressing, under the constraints of still-disciplinary gatekeeping practices, from the initial problematics of British cultural studies.

But, returning to US importing practices, as Hall put it, with an implicit sigh: "I don't know what to say about American cultural studies" (1992: 285). The beauty of being an anthropologist, and yes, I am speaking with irony here, is that I don't really have to say much. I could just rail against it as a corruption of a more ethnography-based investigation of culture, one that anthropology has long cordoned off as its turf. Somehow, though, I cannot seem to get convinced of the grounds for—to say nothing of jumping on—that bandwagon. As Rosaldo consoles, "Losing a monopoly need not be such a bad thing; maybe there is something to be gained from working in more rough-and-tumble arenas where conflict and misunderstanding reign alongside innovative transformations brought by fresh applications and the remodeling of familiar terms" (1994: 529).

I want to turn for a moment, then, to the media object, that incontrovertible presence in so many of our field sites, the same one that so many anthropologists still *de rigueur* dismiss as outside our bailiwick. We have for the most part dodged coming to terms, in any real probing mainstream fashion, with whether and how media makes a difference in our work, no matter, in my case for instance, if that work is in Fresno, California, or in the highlands of southwest China. This is not a statement to the effect that all anthropologists should turn toward scrutiny of the media presence in our data. To the contrary, I want to risk making the statement, so that I can subsequently unpack it, that media—movies, television, print, music, advertising, etc.—cannot be an anthropologist's primary object. It is the centering of the texts at the heart of research—whether it is to study and interpret them, or to strenuously expurgate them as tangential or supplemental to one's data—that trips us up. Nor is the remedy to situate media products with reference to a context that is by implication not-yet-mediated. That separation is increasingly hard to make. Lila Abu-Lughod tells a story of an initial field encounter that makes this point eloquently. She talks of arriving in a village and of the "pleasure of recognition" that a local woman and her children evinced when she professed an interest in television. "They brought out their little television set ... They invited me to come watch with them any evening, pitying me for not having access to a television set of my own. Television," she recalls, "bonded us. And this bond began to separate me from other foreigners, people who generally, as the villagers knew, did not follow the Egyptian television melodramas they loved" (1997: 110).

It is not, then, that media needs to be contextualized, it is that media is the context: for most of us it is an ineluctable part of our field encounters and we make authorial choices at the level of interpretation as to how much to excise it from what we write up. I am not talking about selection of this data or that in the construction of ethnographic texts—I am talking about taking epistemological positions as to whether media is constitutive of the social formations and subjectivities we purport to evoke. And I am also talking about unsettling the text/context distinction, by situating media simultaneously within both, as does Faye Ginsburg when she suggests: "If we recognize the cinematic or video text as a mediating object—as we might look at a ritual or a commodity—then its formal qualities cannot be considered apart from the complex contexts of production and interpretation that shape its construction" (1994: 6). What would it mean—in terms of research

design and methods—to respond to this quandary by taking the phenomenon of media-saturation seriously? We have barely begun to entertain this question.

The exploration that follows draws upon two related aspects of my ethnographic research. I touch on cultural politics and media consumption in post-Mao China, especially among the Miao ethnic group of China's southwest. I then investigate media practices of Hmong refugees from Laos, coethnics of the Miao in China. These immigrants to the United States have become avid producers and consumers of their own ethnic video, in multiple genres, and some have traveled back to Asia and have transfigured those voyages into the contents of their media productions. Both the immobile Miao villagers in China and the world traveling Hmong Americans are implicated, through their deployments of media, in multifarious forms of transnationalism.

Is it Ethnography or is it Celluloid?

I am doing fieldwork in rural China in the 1980s. The site is a community of the Miao minority in the mountains of the southwest. These are the mountains furthest from the glittering centers of China's putative economic miracle, and these are the people on whose backs the much-touted prosperities of the coastal regions are being acquired. As evening falls, I call upon a family, an elite family in which each of the young parents has done a stint living in cities, she for teacher training, he for forestry education. I hope to talk about all the things we have been discussing for months, but talking is not happening that night. The room is darkened, and a tiny black and white TV with snowy reception commands the living area of their three-room abode. Tonight there is a rare broadcast of an American movie: it is *Crocodile Dundee*, the story of a rough-hewn chunk of white masculinity from the Australian outback who so entrances a blonde American reporter that she contrives to bring him to New York to get a sexy sensation out of his savage-meets-the-city experience.

I sit down and we watch together. As the New York scenes begin to play through the techno-snow, the dubbed Chinese-speaking voices superimposed on white bodies and only partially audible through the crackle, the room becomes more highly charged. The film becomes a chronicle, which my viewing companions take very seriously, of a first encounter with the western metropolis. There, catalogued for them—in a text that uses humor to mitigate the discomfort, but at the same time spoofs the alien initiate as he discovers the city's charms—are the technologies, the conveniences, the displays of affluence that had once been vilified by Maoist asceticism, but under Deng had become the objects of a most acute envious desire (Schein 1999a). It is a place they do not envision themselves ever going, yet in my presence, somehow, imagining a visit there in the company of a sympathetic American native, becomes more, well, imaginable.

Is this the kind of imagining that Appadurai urges attention to when he asserts that "More persons throughout the world see their lives through the prism of the possible lives offered by mass media in all their forms ... as the ironic compromise between what they could imagine and what social life will permit" (1996: 53–54)? This sort of translocal subject formation is critical, but cannot be bounded, confined to the dyadic articulation between media texts and viewer positionings. As Mankekar has pointed out in her analysis of television reception in India, "the viewer is positioned not simply by the text but also by a whole range of other discourses" (1993: 557). Assuming multiple forces effecting subject positionings, how can I get a sense of what an American movie means to certain Miao in southwest China, of the forms of imagining it inspires or stifles?

I can surmise these things not because I could, through a mechanical interview methodology, elicit from informants a narration of their viewing subjectivity, but rather because

I am familiar with the shape of their worlds, the images and structures that constrain and incite their fantasies. I can sense this because I lived with them, because we talked about all manners of things, because the kinds of things that mattered to them were deeply impressed on me through myriad encounters and engagements. In some ways these things came to matter to me too, but not because of a kind of naive identification with Miao villagers, a going native, but rather because of the structures that made our worlds proximate. It is not so much because I got inside their heads, because, to cite a fieldwork great grandfather (Malinowski 1960/1922), I obtained the "native's point of view." It is, more accurately, because I too lived in the ambience of China's post-Mao public culture, that kaleidoscopic mass-mediated era in which the growth of material disparities spawned a thickening of desires, quests and frustrations. Watching *Crocodile Dundee* together in China at that historical juncture was not so much about getting at how it played for the other, but about the way it played for us, and about the intersubjective space in which its reception took place.

Is it a dodge for me to emphasize the media object in reflections such as these, displacing my own implication in the orders of difference that put me there and that actually render me a text of an other yearned-for world? Possibly; and I am not going to attempt a definitive resolution of these questions here. Rather, I want to return to the issue of the disciplinary border transgressions implied by attending to the media-saturated character of these field encounters, and of the kinds of "knowledge" they might produce.

Field moments such as this one defy a forceful expurgation of their media contents. Moreover, they shake what is meant by the field, if the text of *Crocodile Dundee* is partially constitutive of it. Again, the quandary is not new, but harks back to earlier struggles over subjectivism and the literary: "In a discipline nurtured in the hothouse of positivism, where 'to see' was more than a metaphor, to admit to the literary was tantamount to admitting to the subjective, and the subjective was, unlike the objective, essentially blind" (Daniel and Peck 1996: 5). To confound the metaphor of blindness and sight, then, might we think in terms of a kind of second sight for anthropologists, one nurtured in the age of mechanical reproduction and savvy about the subtleties of representation? Here I would think of the recent recasting of the notion of the field by Gupta and Ferguson: "Genres seem destined to continue to blur. Yet instead of attempting to... seal off the borders of anthropology from the incursions of cultural studies and other disciplines, it might be a far healthier response to rethink 'the field' of anthropology by reconsidering what our commitment to fieldwork entails" (1997: 38). Likewise, I may be reiterating what Sherry Ortner advocates as a reappropriation of "a larger anthropology in which ethnography, theory, and public culture are held in productive tension" (1998: 415). At the minimum, what my citing of these strategic reflections effects is another way of hinting that the cultural studies that anthropologists have been so assiduously othering is already here, and may have been so for quite a while.

Transnationalism in and through Media

I come to a concern with the very media that has raised anthropological hackles through the concrete conditions of my fieldwork, through the specific types of practices I encountered and my attempts to make sense of them in historical and social context. From 1978, I had worked with Hmong refugees in the West, beginning in the years when they were just arriving from overbombed, war-ravaged Laos after becoming political exiles from a regime they had opposed. They had assisted the CIA in a secret war to block North Vietnamese from stealing through the Lao jungle and to deter the rise of the Communist Pathet Lao. They'd hoped in the process to protect a fragment of territory for their own

politico-economic autonomy in the Southeast Asian highlands. Instead, with US withdrawal they were rendered involuntary migrants, acutely concerned about the depths of their losses—of land, loved ones, lineages, and lifeways.

Hence Hmong migrants have continued to live out their lives and their identities in a diasporic space—one that increasingly involves participation in an imagined, and highly media-constructed, supranational community. By the 1990s, a few Hmong Americans were also becoming transnational border crossers, regularly voyaging to Asian sites, especially Thailand, Laos, and China, on the strength of their First World capital and their US citizenship. They were going for tourism and to visit relatives, they were going for business ventures, and to import goods especially longed for by Hmong Americans, and they were going for other types of social alliances. A search for homeland brides, mistresses, and girlfriends was key for many of the primarily male Hmong travelers. In the 1990s, there was also a boom in camcorder-toting, world-traversing Hmong Americans who in turn included many less mobile others in their privileged travel by means of the circulation of images garnered from their Asian voyages. Media practices, then, had become pivotal in securing, generating, and collectively processing Hmong transnationality.

Among the well over 120,000 Hmong in the US, not a few have taken up various technologies of cultural (re)production—for music recording, newspaper publishing, or video making. This burgeoning production of Hmong media is not only recreational and by amateurs, but also by entrepreneurs who have made it their livelihood. Videos, shot, edited and marketed all by Hmong, are in Hmong language and, like all Hmong media, targeted exclusively for intraethnic consumption. Shrink-wrapped and usually copyrighted, they sell for up to \$30 a piece. Although usually produced for profit, they are not backed by corporate or other advertising interests.

It is in such a productive media environment that homeland video takes its place. There are videos that portray Laos, birthplace of almost all Hmong Americans and scene of the Secret War orchestrated by the CIA in which Hmong fought as guerillas during Vietnam. There are those set in Thailand, where Hmong sojourned in refugee camps before being granted permission to migrate to the West. And there are those that document a mythologized land of origins in the mountains of southwest China. Several genres regularly appear on the market: narrated travelogues on the order of homemade tourism videos, stories, and folktales enacted in “traditional” homeland sites, historical reconstructions and tracings of migration routes, dramatic restagings of war and flight, martial arts action stories, contemporary (melo)dramas concerning Asian lives, documents of festivals, pageants and other events, and an avalanche of music videos.

These tapes invite, or perhaps interpellate, Hmong Americans into a globally diasporic sensibility, one in which they can sense a connectedness to newly fashioned ethnokin not only in the lands they themselves left behind in their own lifetimes, but in more distant Vietnam, Burma, southwest China. Describing immigrant literature, Azade Seyhan has suggested that: “By remembering, reappropriating, and allegorizing into language, the ethnic immigrant subject invents a new cultural space for her personal and communal self” (Seyhan 1996: 184). This cultural space, media-generated for Hmong, is not in the form of a discrete subnational niche but rather sprawls over the globe. To capture the reception effects of viewing such wide-ranging images, I refer to the process of transnational subjectification. But, to go further, I maintain that the transnationality that Hmong media effects is not only at the level of subjectification but also at the level of social relations, of actual mobilities. What is called for in tracking these processes is what I call a siteless or itinerant ethnographic method that extends beyond the multisite approach

that has been outlined by George Marcus (1998). It entails a highly mobile approach to fieldwork, one that permits rapid movement between a range of sometimes ephemeral venues, and one that builds in deep engagement with the texts embedded in these circuits. In what follows, I pursue this discussion by provisionally disaggregating production, consumption, and text.

Production. Hmong media with homeland themes involves decidedly transnational relations of production. Not only are Hmong American producers themselves traveling to Asia with their camcorders and crews, they are also involving many Asian Hmong and Miao in their enterprises. These involvements take many forms. Hmong American producers may hire crews and actors on site in Thailand or Laos. They may choose a popular Hmong/Miao singer or dancer in any of these countries and promote them as a phenomenon with special allure for nostalgic Hmong American consumers. Of late, one of the most lucrative ventures in the industry is that of Hmong entrepreneurs buying the rights to feature films out of Hong Kong, Thailand, China or even India and dubbing them into Hmong language. In some cases they also subcontract the translation and voiceover work to their coethnics in Asia in order to save labor costs. Video pioneer Su Thao, of ST Universal Video, who studied in Hollywood and has produced dozens of videos in Asia, actually established an office in Thailand near a large settlement of relocated Hmong from Laos. This way he could take advantage of regular involvement of locals and also expedite his projects. Transnational Hmong media, then, is unthinkable outside of these complex supralocal production modalities.

Consumption. The most sizable US Hmong aggregations are in the California Central Valley, Minneapolis–St. Paul, and Wisconsin where the presence of tens of thousands means that Hmong ethnic businesses thrive. Not surprisingly, these are the locations of much of the Hmong media production, and of the outlets for most direct sales. In every large Hmong community, ethnic groceries have sprung up which market not only a range of Asian consumables, but also Hmong media products—cassettes, CDs, and videos. In Fresno, St. Paul, even Wausau, Wisconsin, there are video shops exclusively for Hmong, offering sales, but mostly rentals, of hundreds of movies. Hmong American festivals, especially the large scale ones such as Fresno Hmong New Year in late December, and the Fourth of July Soccer Tournament in St. Paul, are glutted with open air stalls where producers and their agents set up tables to display and sell media products. Hmong consumers both pride themselves on establishing longstanding collections, and also regularly exchange videos between friends and family.

I have spent a good deal of time hanging out at various sales venues, watching people consume and talking to them about their choices. I also spend time in Hmong living rooms around the United States, cataloguing peoples' media collections, watching with them and talking to them about their consumption tastes. Among the many genres and viewing modalities, I have particularly followed the videos with homeland themes, whether documentaries, dramas, or music tapes, with an eye toward understanding what difference they made in what I've called the forging of transnationality. What desires, what identities and identifications, what alliances are generated in the Hmong reception of homeland images? The following vignette illustrates some of the viewing subject positions, the range of ways in which Hmong Americans engage homeland material, emphasizing that while its appeal is highly differentiated, video is nonetheless a powerful agent in creating transnational presence in immigrant spaces.

In 1999, I visit a Hmong American grandfather in Philadelphia to find two big crates of videos next to a large-screen television, the focal point of his living room. "This is my history collection," he tells me. "I am thinking of getting all my videos on DVD, and my tapes on CD, so I can keep them longer." As he places the first box on the floor for me to sort, his two-year-old granddaughter rushes over to do her own sorting. She extracts tape after tape, strewing them across the living room carpet, glancing with a discerning eye at each one she discards. Finally she finds the one of her choice. It is *China Part 3* by ST Universal Video. Wordlessly nudging her grandpa, pleading to him with her eyes, she insists that he play the tape. She plunks down in front to watch a kaleidoscope of dancing, singing and costume with narration in her first language, one she is only beginning to understand.

The elder tells me that the toddler's favorite videos are the China dancing tapes and those of Hmong beauty contests. "All the Hmong babies like this kind of video," comments the child's 28-year-old Dad, returning from his class with a quizzical look on his face. His younger sister, a 22-year-old Temple University student, has just told me that she enjoys every genre of videos, except the cultural documentaries. "I don't know ... I wasn't born there," she demurs, defending her disinterest. Her brother concurs, emphasizing that the China tapes are simply not engaging. He watches his daughter sit riveted before the swinging skirts of dancing Miao girls, the crooned melodies of old-time courtship songs, the virtuoso dancing of bamboo reed pipe players. He is not drawn toward the screen, but speaks directly to me, imputing a nascent ethnic identification to his daughter with a touch of incredulity: "It's the culture, I guess." Later I observe that the toddler will throw tantrums if she is not allowed to dress up in the costume of Miao from China. And she is most elated when family members playfully address her by the name of Mee Hang, one of the most famous of Miao singers from China. As is typical in so many Hmong households, while the young adult generation remains nonplussed, both grandparents and young children are employing homeland videos to effect a sense of unity with the most distant of their peoples.

Text. This kind of devoted fandom is one type of consumption, but I want to focus now on another type, one structured around gendered spectatorship. In the bulk of Hmong American media, homeland desire is distinctly gendered. Videos range over the youthful faces and ornate adornments of homeland women, they strategically place attractive women in nostalgia films as a focal point for the gaze of the homesick viewer, and they fashion scripts of courtship, sexual trysts and marriages to homeland brides. How specifically does the costumed, singing, smiling, traditional woman get constructed as an object of longing? How might her incarnations in media incite forms of eroticism not present, or only latent, before the moment of watching her in so many genres of text? Here I take up the third aspect of mediated transnationalism, that of textual contents. The semiotics of homeland representations and the dense intertextuality that characterizes Hmong migrant media becomes a crucial source of insight. To explore the dimension of textual interpretation, and to make the case for its imbrication with other aspects of media study, I turn to the consideration of one video.

Dr. Tom, Parts 1, 2 and 3, is a text in transnationality. In the late 1990s, the video was by almost all accounts, the "most popular" out of hundreds that were being produced, circulated, and consumed among Hmong from Southeast Asia now living in the United States. It was hanging out in a Hmong-run beauty salon in Fresno that I first heard of the then two-part drama *Yuav Tos Txog Hnub Twg* colloquially referred to as "Dr. Tom." Shot

in Thailand on the spur of the moment with a shoestring budget and an improvised script, the blockbuster is the creation of Ga Moua, formerly involved in the Hmong music scene, and a frequent traveler to Asia. The story combines time-honored Hmong folklore motifs—including the tragic orphan boy and the exquisite torment of unconsummated love—with newfangled themes of transnational relationships gone wrong.

Set in a refugee camp in Thailand, Part One showcases a beautiful saronged young woman who is just falling in love with a young man who has been raised as her step-brother after the horrible murder of his parents by a predatory Thai gang as they crossed out of Laos. In jets “Tom,” a Hmong American man, with slicked hair, sunglasses, a cowboy-booted swagger, a camcorder, and claims of being a highly paid “Doctor.” Tom immediately begins wooing the girl’s family with money, and convinces them that it would be best for everyone’s future if she marries him. Despite her broken heart, the family gives her away, just in time for her new husband to run out of money and flee back to his vindictive first wife in the United States, leaving the girl to wait, wasting her life indefinitely. It is the pain of this waiting that is evoked in the title of the video, which translates roughly as “When will be the day that I am waiting for?”

The more didactic Part Two reveals the gradual demise of the evil-doing Dr. Tom, who turns out to be nothing but a janitor in an American doctor’s office. Lying to an uncle-in-law that he needs a loan to start a farm, he garners enough cash to race back to Thailand where he learns that his second wife has abandoned her marriage to him and returned to her original boyfriend. Having been resoundingly rebuked by her now-savvy parents, he tries in vain to impress many other women, all of whom let him know that they are no longer to be duped by men from America. Humiliated, he returns home, violently vents his frustration on his wife, who in turn reports him for domestic abuse, and he ends up, in a dramatic climax, arrested, handcuffed, and carted off to jail.

What is the social life of this story as it circulates in Hmong America, focalizing issues of gender in transition, of sexual exploitation? The wide consumption of the text makes of a relatively small-scale practice of male homeland sexual adventuring, a near-universal concern that touches both men and women in the Hmong Diaspora. When I first began watching and thinking about this video, I was intrigued with the question of why the director, a Hmong man and a regular traveler to Asia, would have produced such a morally didactic text. Why would a Hmong man with the potential to access the gender power that homeland touring has offered to male returnees produce a text that comes off as feminist critique? There are, I think, at least two ways of looking at this question.

First, the creation of this story, and its wrenching treatment of the tragedies of the accumulation and abuse of patriarchal power in its border-crossing modality, plays to a female market. Some Hmong I talked to told me that women are the primary purchasers and viewers of the videos, since they are more likely to be at home with limited English and idle time. Indeed, the director says that the reason Dr. Tom was jailed in Part Two was because women wanted to see justice done. Meanwhile, he was berated by Hmong men for creating such an unfavorable portrait of them.

The director’s attempt to placate a female viewership is one possible explanation for why *Dr. Tom’s* message should come off as so didactic, but there is another way of thinking about how such a gendered critique should emerge from the editing room of an American man. I want here to fuzz up the comfortable categories of production, circulation, and consumption that have been so helpful in cultural studies method to unsettle any facile binary between authorial intent and audience reaction. Can *Dr. Tom*, the movie, be thought of instead as a node and a site of condensation for the intersecting concerns of

Hmong in discrepant social locations, all nonetheless confronting the desire to forge unities out of radical disparities and finding pleasures and agonies along the way?

The idea of such a videotext as a site of condensation rather than a product of a specific authorial intent is supported by the polyglot and collaborative way in which *Dr. Tom* was made. As the director tells it, it was a Thai driver who suggested the central premise for the film while chauffeuring Ga Moua, camcorder on his shoulder, to visit family members. Ga Moua availed himself of his relatives' help, recruiting a niece to act opposite him as the beautiful yet reluctant bride. Other friends and relatives played the other roles, and they improvised the story and the lines as they went along. After the release of Part 1, audience members, as we've seen, also played a role in the creative process. Their feedback was in large part what, according to Ga Moua, propelled the design of the subsequent scripts. Dilemmas over how the transnational relationship with coethnics in Asia was to be carried out, and in turn represented, as well as fractures over gender and geopolitical positioning, all came into consideration as the text grew, not only through the creation of Parts Two and Three, but in the communal conversations that began to ensue with widening viewership. Indeed, Part Three ends with letters on the screen, a direct address to viewers in the first person plural: "Thanks to all the people who have helped us put this video together and to those who have financed it. If we've done anything that's offensive, please everyone forgive us." More than an author's mechanical response to audience demands, we can think here more concretely of the kind of social space inhabited by the text—one in which the story itself is imbricated in social life—rather than thinking of it as a text in a dyadic relation with audience reactions.

The *Dr. Tom* story, and its resounding reception within the Hmong American community, shows that ethnic media has a role not only in bringing the images of coethnics in distant Asia into Western living rooms for entertainment, but also of working through current concerns in the ongoing development of Hmong transnationalism. Hamid Naficy has written eloquently of what he calls "independent transnational film" produced by immigrants making texts of their exilic lives.

By linking genre, authorship, and transnational positioning, the independent transnational genre allows films to be read and reread not only as individual texts produced by authorial vision and generic conventions, but also as sites for intertextual, cross-cultural, and transnational struggles over meanings and identities ... More, this genre considers the relationship of the transnational filmmakers to their subjects to be a relationship that is filtered through narratives and iconographies of memory, desire, loss, longing, and nostalgia. Memories are fallible, playful, and evasive, and the narratives and iconographies that they produce—in whatever type of film—are palimpsestical, inscribing ruptures, fantasies, and embellishments as well as ellipses, elisions, and repressions (1996: 121).

At the same time that *Dr. Tom* works through concerns about community there is another aspect, an intangible domain of incitement, the filmic framing of the homeland beauty, her irresistibility. For the many men who have not returned to Asia, or are contemplating it, the video is the stuff of fantasy, the intimation of romantic possibilities.

This theme comes home strongly in other videos, both fictional and documentary, on homeland topics. One widely sold video entitled *Vib Nais*, after the main Hmong refugee camp—Ban Vinai—in Thailand, is a nostalgic revisit to a site that many Hmong American viewers remember as the place they came of age. Contrary to the mainstream image of the grimy and demeaning squalor of a holding settlement where Hmong were forced to

sojourn, this tape explores the feeling tones of the highly charged locales that remain so deeply engraved on the memories of those who made the camp their home, sometimes for over a decade. Having cinematographically surveyed key sites such as the school, the United Nations office, and the water pump, the tape devotes an especially ample amount of time to the relatively deserted road where young people used to court. The male narrator talks softly, describing with affection the niceties of holding hands, of playing, flirting. In a poignant rehearsal of loss, he laments: "Now, I don't know where my lover has gone. Maybe she still remembers when I was holding her hand and we were together." The effect is enhanced by the placement of a popular Hmong beauty, a stylishly dressed Hmong Thai singer and star of the transnational Hmong music scene, who voicelessly accentuates whatever is the focus of the image, like a retro *Vanna White*.

Intertextual perspectives on romantic/erotic video themes also reveal nostalgia for a particular kind of male privilege. It is not only gender power but also an intensity of desire that is captured in the evocations of longing for first loves. *China Part Three* is a widely circulated video that documents the voyage of a group of almost exclusively male delegates from the United States to attend an ethnic festival in Yunnan. Along the way, they pick up some exotically dressed Miao women (of the Hmong dialect group), who ride their bus with them to the festival like escorts. On site, the producer and other Hmong American men are seen in their western trenchcoats and athletic wear opposite a seemingly endless number of ornamented women much younger than they are. The camera zooms in close, peering voyeuristically at their faces, and depicts them with the men playing a customary ball toss game traditionally reserved for courtship among unmarrieds. Some scenes even show flirtatious dialogues between the middle-aged men and the demure women.

We can speak, then, not only of transnational subjectification, but of erotic subjectification, as male viewers consume, along with images of homeland beauties, representations of a remembered sexual culture that includes such specificities as access to very young women, and marriage by capture (both of which are out of bounds in the US legal code). Interestingly, in *Dr. Tom Part Three*, once Tom has reached the highlands of Laos, he is finally able to procure a bride through one of the traditionally sanctioned methods, a method that would have been transgressive even in the Thai refugee camps and towns depicted in Parts One and Two. After courting a Hmong village girl to no avail, he assembles some clan members to abduct her as she walks on a deserted path. Once she has been "with" Tom for a short period, presumably losing her virginity along the way, her parents agree to the union. While for Tom this may be a desperate measure, Hmong viewers know that the video rehearses a time-honored mode of acquiring a bride, one which many remember from their own or their parents' personal histories, but one which is now only legitimate in remote places such as the Lao countryside. What I am suggesting is that there is a special aura of desirability that surrounds the homeland woman, an aura born of the culturally particular forms of conquest to which she is subject. In other words, it is precisely these cultural particularities, in an atmosphere of loss and nostalgia that accrue to the homeland woman's allure. She becomes a quintessential product of what Ginsburg, Abu-Lughod and Larkin (2002: 10) following Miller (1995a: 18) refer as the "strategic objectification of culture" through media.

Conclusions

A decade ago, two anthropologists sparred over what was then framed as the **postmodernism** controversy. Elizabeth Traube (1989) did a reading of the film *Ferris Bueller's Day*

Off in terms of what it told us about American social life. Michael Moffatt (1990) rebutted with an avowedly anti-postmodern counterreading of the text. His conclusion, however, is in favor of a kind of disciplinary rectification in which he impugns Traube's authority by asking "What ... is an anthropologist doing publishing an article in a journal of anthropology about the meaning of certain cultural artifacts which is based on no ethnographically rooted evidence of what these artifacts mean to 'the natives'?" (1990: 371–2). Despite Traube's quip in retort, to the effect that Moffatt is guilty of an "overvaluation of reception" (1990: 378), we are left with a quandary, the still-nagging dilemma as to what, methodologically and interpretively, would constitute a viable encounter with the mediated form.

The debate continues to revolve around the binary of textualism versus social context. In making the case for figuring media as an anthropological object, Abu-Lughod, discussing a television show, makes a bold statement in favor of textualism: "How can we study the encounter between some Upper Egyptian village women and this television serial? With television programs, one is forced to talk not so much about cultures-as-texts as about discrete cultural texts that are produced, circulated, consumed." (1997: 114). Indeed, only by encountering media texts inquisitively, deploying with impunity the reading strategies that have been used for literary and other filmic texts, can we engage them with the depth required to situate them in social life. But my point for the purposes of this discussion is that anthropologists needn't privilege the textual *per se*, but rather the sign-saturated social life of which media is one element. In the case of Hmong Americans, and of transnational Hmong community, media is implicated in so many ways—from the economics of transnational production and domestic distribution, to the actual relationships forged in production relations, to the involvement of audiences in shaping the scripts they want to consume, to the incitements to travel and sometimes to pursue erotic attachments across borders. Theorizing social practice, in so many instances, then, cannot be undertaken with the enforced exclusion of media.

Hmong American media, then, can be seen as a polyglot enterprise that reveals itself to be a major force in Hmong social life, identity formation and economic strategies. It is never exclusively the politics of the American site that shape Hmong media and this is how it differs from case studies in specifically national contexts (Abu-Lughod 1995, Mankekar 1999, Rofel 1994). Fruitful anthropological work has been done on the kinds of transnational imaginings enabled through the consumption of media products from within particular localities (Appadurai 1996, Miller 1992, Schein 1999b, Yang 1997), but the peripatetic character of the likes of Hmong media demands more complex methodologies. Generated within webs of diasporic linkage, such media is produced in, circulates in, represents, and structures relations across national borders. Yet it is far from being generically cosmopolitan. Anderson has pointed out that "Not least as a result of the ethnicization of political life in the wealthy, postindustrial states, what one can call **long-distance nationalism** is visibly emerging. This type of politics, directed mainly towards the former Second and Third Worlds, pries open the classical nation-state project from a different direction" (1998: 73).

This is why I emphasize the imbrication of media with transnational subjectification. "Globalization and image culture do not exist separately first and then interact with each other. Image culture has not merely been globalized, nor is globalization merely characterized by the ubiquitous dissemination of transnationally produced images ... on a fundamental level globalization and image are inseparable from each other" (Yoshimoto 1996: 109). It is not only that the relations precipitated by Hmong media—from the trans-

fer of dollars, to the transfer of wives, to the movement of travelers back and forth across the Pacific—are materially consequential at the supranational scale. It is also that the specific meanings embedded in so many of the texts that are produced can be seen as interpellating Hmong consuming subjects into a kind of border-crossing sensibility, one that sites their identity in no one nation-culture, but only in the interstitial spaces they have carved out through millennia of wars and conflicts with dominant others. This becomes the substance of Hmong collective memory and the focus of all manner of pained reflections on the differences that their dispersal has generated and exacerbated.

A text such as *Dr. Tom*, then, has a palpable social reality for those it addresses. It inhabits and enunciates the transnational space in which Hmong Americans live. Asked about *Dr. Tom*, most Hmong I spoke to chuckled or smiled, with a glimmer of irony. Why did they think it was so popular? "Because it's true," most of them said, "It's a real story." Not that this particular story actually happened, they hastened to explain, but that this kind of thing happens all the time. Some talked disapprovingly about the calculations of Hmong and Miao families, situated in the Third World and willing to offer their daughters to secure that transnational alliance that would magically transform their economic fortunes. What the text condenses is a collective concern over emerging cleavages, a painful awareness that beyond horizontal solidarity, Hmong/Miao transnationality is fraught with pitfalls for identitarian aims—a minefield in which those from the West suspect those in Asia of economic opportunism, while those in Asia see their Western counterparts as sexual predators. Read at the level of its social life in transnational space, *Dr. Tom* might be seen as a call for ethnic self-scrutiny in which the wrenching realities of internal exploitation could be brought to light and expelled.

Yet even as the Hmong sense of collectivity spans the globe, augmented by media messages, those same media messages may also play a role in refashioning the most intimate of interiorities. Transnational erotics, such as we see in Hmong media, remixes sex and space, revealing that physical distance and proximity are complexly intertwined in the contours of homeland desire. My object is to situate erotics not simply in the personal or the psychological, but in a transregional cultural economy in which national, ethnic, racial identities are always implicated, and in which global geopolitics participates in shaping longings and fantasies. Such longings and fantasies in turn spur practices that become the stuff of certain transnational linkages.

One might ask how an anthropological interpretation of a text is different from a literary-critical interpretation. It is not really a methodological difference. Anthropologists didn't create something new here. Rather, it is the fact that you interpret the text in a social context, in the context of observations. Instead of treating the text as an entity in itself, you treat it as a tool to observe the production of culture. You treat producing, distributing and consuming texts as a social activity. This is what I refer to as an "ethnotextual" approach to media research. You bring the text in contact with the people, as it were. You can watch a video or a television program, or read an article, and then discuss it with your informants, or talk to its makers. You break down the boundary between the text and the field. You make connections between the text, the speaker, and the observed social situation.

How do you recognize which media is more important than others in impacting identity? This is an important question as, obviously, Hmong in the US also consume mainstream American media. How much do the Hmong videos matter at all? Surveys

on the consumption of ethnic or homeland media versus mainstream media have become quite common in sociology. For me, it is not a major research objective to determine which is more formative for the migrant, because my interest is in the transnational part of Hmong American identity, not in the weight of that part versus other identity processes that of course go on simultaneously, such as assimilation into the American mainstream.

At the level of a family, it is obviously important for me to see when people watch television versus watching videos, as well as what other videos they watch. I meet teenagers and people in their twenties who, when they see me watching videos with their parents, say "I can't stand those things, I like American movies." Family collections usually include a few Disney videos or sometimes a history documentary about the Vietnam War; but they also have Hmong videos. I take note of the relative quantity of various genres. But I don't spend a lot of time interviewing Hmong about television. This choice to research only certain dimensions of diasporic Hmong lives is one way my study differs from a more conventional immigrant study.

Chapter 6

The “New Migrant”: State and Market Constructions of Modernity and Patriotism

PÁL NYÍRI

Transnationalism

In the past decade, “transnationalism” has become a buzzword in the study of migration and diasporas. For me, this concept is, when used in a strict sense, a useful tool to study migration. I must immediately say two things:

1. that I take migration in the broadest sense to be the movement of people between places perceived to be culturally different; and
2. that I am interested in this movement because it produces particularly intense cultural imaginaries of the self and of the other, i.e., discourses of identity.

When Glick Schiller et al. (1994) introduced the concept of transnationalism, they argued that conventional nation-state-centered migration theory, which regards international migrants as individuals who depart (emigrants) or arrive (immigrants), needs revision, because a growing number of populations behave, socially and politically, in a way that can no longer be explained within the framework of the nation-state order.

Falling time and costs of transportation, communication, and transfer of information and money has not just sped up but enabled the reconciliation of multiple life-styles and projects. This **time-space compression** led to the growth of populations socially, culturally, and physically anchored “at multiple sites,” often characterized by a high mobility both between the state of origin and the state of residence, and often other states, rendering the concepts of “outward/return migration” meaningless.

Nyíri on what's wrong with migration theories see pp. 104–106

In a transnationalist optics, migration is a multilevel (demographic, political, economic, cultural, familial) process that involves various links between two or more settings rather than a discrete event constituted by a permanent move from one nation to another.

Defined in these terms, transnationalism is not a semantic innovation but a tangibly distinctive phenomenon, which has direct implications for the interaction between migrants and the local society, because it means that migrants no longer necessarily have to accumulate local **cultural capital**. Transnationalism thus makes the traditional terms of assimilation, integration, or segregation in which states have dealt with immigration obsolete.

States and transnationalism

A number of scholars point out that transnational phenomena are not new, but they are more intense, more interconnected and, unlike previously, legitimized and celebrated by sending states, acknowledged and even feared by receiving states. For example, the Philippine National Assembly recently introduced a draft law granting the right of vote to undocumented citizens abroad. In the last presidential election in Mexico, the successful candidate, Vicente Fox, campaigned among Mexicans in the United States.

Conversely, to show their care for the home countries of their constituencies, former New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani visited the Dominican Republic and former Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu visited the Ukraine, Russia, and Georgia during their respective reelection campaigns. Such actions are not unprecedented; Harry Truman appealed to the East European voters by talking about the liberation of their homelands from Communism, and this kind of politics has continued to this day with Cuban-Americans. But the visibility and overtness with which migrant populations' loyalties are contested and manipulated from both ends is novel. Vertovec and Cohen (1999) even argue in the case of small countries with large migrant populations abroad and a high density and regularity of kinship and economic ties that the "home" and "host" societies can "dissolve in each other." One case where the state appears to have been acting more like a modern nation-state toward its citizens abroad than domestically is Eritrea, which has been studied by Khalid Koser (2000). Some 10% of Eritreans live abroad, and they are subjected to a 2% income tax by the Eritrean government. Koser found that the government maintains an accurate list of citizens abroad and provides transparent accounting of where their remittances are spent; yet there is no census domestically, and Eritrea has been engaged in a war whose level of modernity is often likened to First World War.

Whether transnationalism is new or not, the fact that it is now consciously practiced by states is enough to make it interesting, because its state legitimation and media celebration (or abomination) feed back to the identity formation and cultural discourse of migrants. Sending states, by legitimizing transnational communities and incorporating them in the body politic of the nation, can create politically active citizens from people who, before migrating, were politically disenfranchised. They can be engaged in "long-distance nationalism" and attempt to influence host-country politics. But transnational communities act both ways: they can also project host-country politics into home-country politics. The multistranded relationship between Turkish political organizations in Europe and parties in Turkey, studied by Østergaard (2001), is an obvious example. Here, the political discourses and strategies of Islamic and Kurdish organizations in Turkey are strongly influenced by their counterparts in Germany. Both sending and receiving states have expanded their security focus from nations as adversaries to transnational subversives ranging from organized crime and terrorist groups to Internet chat groups.

What methodological problems does the study of transnationalism raise?

The study of transnationalism raises methodological challenges both compared to sociological studies of migration—which typically deal with migration processes already completed—and for anthropological fieldwork. “Fieldwork”—close observation of human behavior in a particular setting—has been the hallmark of cultural anthropology. Traditionally, fieldwork meant residing some considerable length of time among the group studied and participating in their activities. As people’s mobility increases and more attention is paid to studying people who move, the definitions of fieldwork are changing.

Beyond a single site

Tracing transnational connections requires going beyond a single site. For example, if studying the Chinese in Hungary within the confines of Hungary’s borders, one would fail to uncover the social and economic spaces of the migrants as they frequently move, trade, and communicate between Hungary and other European countries as well as China. While it still makes sense to speak of the “Chinese in Hungary” as a stable group sharing certain common characteristics, the individual members of this group are constantly replaced through an in- and outflow of persons. If we were to prepare maps of socioeconomic spaces, they would

Schein: “The field site is ephemeral”

be different for each migrant. Chinese migrants resist and appropriate various local institutions, discourses, and symbols in different ways in different places. To varying degrees, the same is true for all transnationals.

Old distinctions become obsolete

Basic underlying concepts of migration studies such as the distinction between migrant, traveler, and refugee or between legal and illegal migrant have become obsolete. Let us take a “permanent resident” in a foreign country who spends half of his time in the home country and in third countries, a “foreign investor” who gains that status in his home country after only a few months of residence abroad, and a “tourist” who only makes short trips abroad but maintains a business network there. Is the distinction between them a useful one? This is not only a conceptual problem but also a data-collection one, as governments and international organizations maintain the old, rigid boundaries between categories of people who move, with mostly incompatible databases. Movements of different type and duration, often determined by expediency, may look different from the standpoint of national statistics but create very similar transnational social spaces.

Problems with qualitative data

Lomanov on migration estimates

There are many problems with estimating how many Chinese there are in Russia. First of all, in the Russian Far East, we have immigrants mostly from the neighboring provinces of China. In Vladivostok or in parts of Siberia you mostly find people who come from Heilongjiang, Liaoning, Inner Mongolia, and partly from Jilin Province. In Moscow you can find people from all parts of China.

Of course the intent is also different. People who come to Moscow mostly come to stay longer, and those who come to the Far East are mostly moving back and forth, doing business and making money.

In 1992, the Russian Government adopted a visa-free regime of travel between the Russian Federation and China. A high official of the Russian Foreign Affairs Ministry acknowledged in a private conversation in 2001 that this decision had opened the door to illegal migration, but it had been necessary because of the disruption of trade distribution networks in the wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union, when the Russian Far East faced scarcity of food and consumer goods. Chinese traders had helped solve this problem.

The period from 1992 to the beginning of 1994 was the period of the greatest influx of Chinese migrants into Russia. In 1994, the visa-free agreement was limited to diplomatic and service passports, and from the spring of 2001, it was narrowed to diplomatic passports only.

Visa-free group tourism in bordering provinces is still there. The Russian Foreign Ministry could easily agree to call on Beijing to cancel this arrangement, but the visa statistics show that the number of Russian visitors to China increasingly exceeds the number of the Chinese visiting Russia. The number of Chinese tourists and visitors is slowly declining, and the number of visitors from Russia to China is growing. So the Russian government is reluctant to cut visa-free border tourism.

In Moscow, the City Department of Visas and Registrations said in 1999: we have only 10,000 Chinese officially registered in Moscow. Later, they said: there are probably several hundred thousand Chinese in Moscow, but they are unregistered. So we don't know where they are. We have 10,000 registered. And we guess probably it is 100,000, but we don't know. This is like saying: we have five Chinese in all the town; we think there really are a thousand times more, but we don't have such a figure.

On one end, you have official statistics, which are the smallest numbers. On the other, the biggest ones are just journalism or alarmist political statements, where the figures are exaggerated. Official figures are unbelievably small and the alarmist figures are unbelievably large. Between these two extremes there are another two sets of figures. One set is by scholars who are working for state institutions, like the Russian Academy of Sciences and universities. Sometimes they are critical about official statistics; they say they are probably too small but the Chinese are assuring us that migration is under control. Usually if you get an official figure of ten people, probably scholars who are working for official institutions will give you something like 100.

The other set of figures is by independent scholars who are working with foreign funds in Russia: Zaionchkovskaia and Gelbras. Their money is not coming from the Russian government but from the Carnegie, MacArthur, or Ford Foundations. That's why they are independent in their conclusions, and when official statistics give ten people and official scholars will give one hundred, they'll give you several thousand. So probably their estimates are somewhere in between the alarmist figures of millions and official

statistics' dozens. According to the study carried out by Professor Gelbras, the number of Chinese in Moscow is 22 to 25 thousand.

The Migration Service says there are maybe 30,000 Chinese residents in Russia. Scholars' figures range between 400 thousand and 1 million. A study by Vitkovskaia and Zaionchkovskaia shows 200,000 to 300,000 Chinese in Eastern Siberia and the Far East by the late nineties. How do people produce such figures as two million or three million Chinese in Russia? There are no rational explanations.

Then there is yet another set of figures, that of the Chinese authorities. The Chinese state also claims to know how many Chinese there are in Russia, down to the individuals. First of all there is a figure from the embassy. And second, there is a figure from the so-called *Qiaqing Pucha*, the Overseas Chinese Census, which is done through relatives of the migrants in China. The questionnaires are sent to families in China.

And finally, there are indirect ways of estimating the number of the Chinese. In the summer of 2001, a Tu-154 aircraft of the airline Vladivostok Avia flying from Yekaterinburg in Western Siberia to Vladivostok crashed near Irkutsk, and ten percent of the passengers were Chinese. And several of them were illegals. Can we see this as a random sample of the local population and conclude that Chinese account for ten percent of that segment of the local population which can afford flying? (Another interesting detail is that this plane had been used by a Chinese airline before having been purchased by Vladivostok Avia. Russian papers immediately speculated that the accident is the fault of the Chinese airline that had not properly maintained the plane. Yet the investigation pointed to pilot error.)

This provocative way of "estimating" just serves to illustrate that even an estimate like this would be more reliable than saying there are three million Chinese. The latter figure means nothing at all, and yet it is cited by many scholars and politicians, who do not even explain how they get it.

Most quantitative data collected by national authorities reflect only part of migration processes and may be misleading because (1) they use irrelevant criteria, such as household registration or residence of a half year, in defining whom to count as a migrant, and (2) they are unreliable. Figures on illegal migrant flows used by law enforcement and international migration agencies often circulate from publication to publication for years without changing, while the real situation is in rapid flux. On the other hand, useful quantitative data samples may come from unexpected corners. For example, asylum application data provide a good sample of migrants from Zhejiang and Fujian provinces of China to Europe if one accepts qualitative findings that there is no separation between so-called legal and illegal migratory flows within that group. Solicitors or NGOs often maintain databases of asylum applicants that run into the thousands, and contain more information, for example, on place of origin or family relations than official statistics.

The importance of texts

While anthropology is increasingly embracing the study of texts, this is particularly necessary in the case of transnationalism. Migrants now often articulate their experiences, create public discourses of belonging and write their own history in an array of printed and broadcast media after they have migrated. In addition to a partly intentional process of identity construction and history-writing, these media report on busi-

ness opportunities, amnesties for illegal aliens, and other factors that influence migration and investment flows. Only ten years after the beginning of Chinese migration to Hungary, eight Chinese periodicals are published in Budapest, four novels and two non-fiction accounts have been written and two television serials created by migrants on their experiences in Hungary. Through such media and personal networks, a Chinese in Latin America is informed of amnesties for illegal immigrants in Italy early enough to be able to go there to benefit from it.

How do I study transnationalism?

The transnational social field can be defined and studied at three levels.

Level 1

First, there is the immediate, lived experience of the individual, which is the classical object of anthropological fieldwork. But the field here is multisited, determined by the extent and frequency of travel, telephone calls, e-mails, etc. Mapping these interactions is often impossible in practical terms. Instead, what I usually try to do is visit the key sites of the transnational field; for Fujianese in Hungary, these often include China, Hungary, and Italy, where many of them have relatives they regularly talk to. Instead of sitting for a predetermined length of time at either of these places, however, I adjust to the time-space dynamics of my informants, availing myself of invitations to congresses of native-place associations, going along on private family trips, making phone calls, going to see local officials and joining business negotiations with the informants. In this way, while I violate certain taboos of fieldwork by becoming enmeshed in the field, I also see transnational ties in action: who mobilizes them, when, and with what purpose.

Level 2

Secondly, I find out the private narratives that accompany such transnational acts, i.e., whether a particular familial, business, official, or native-place connection in a particular situation is positioned as pragmatic or essential. For example, does a person engaged in business cooperation with a family member in another country explain this by referring to their family connections ("Of course, we work together. We are relatives.") or rather by saying: "I cooperate with her, as she knows the local officials and has good access to real estate." The transnational social field is composed of institutions, discourses, symbols and markers, picked up from different localities. Which of these are employed in private narratives depends on which regimes of truth and power people try to evade or follow. Ong (1999) describes how these systems are manipulated in the quest for **flexible accumulation**.

Level 3

Third, I read the public—media, literature, cinema—narratives by and about migrants in which migrants often position themselves differently vis-à-vis China and the local society. These narratives continuously interplay with private identity construction and

enactment. Even more than private narratives, public texts are instrumental. When ascribing certain qualities to the narrator or the subject of the text they try, for example, to legitimize power, hierarchy or difference, whether in ethnic, gender, or age terms.

Overseas Chinese, emigration policy, and discourse in the PRC

One distinguishing element of migration today is the state legitimization of sustained practices of dual-anchoredness or dual allegiance. Here, I attempt to show how the People’s Republic of China (PRC) has, in the past two decades, moved to legitimize, both by institutional and discursive means, such practices first in established overseas Chinese communities and then among migrants *in statu nascendi*. While referring to the PRC as a single agent as a matter of shorthand, I intend to problematize the issue of state agency, arguing for its multiplicity.

Nyíri: How did I study this?

This block is chiefly about state policies, which is a classical political science field. Yet its study with respect to contemporary Chinese migration also requires anthropological field methods. Not all policies are explicitly formulated, and in authoritarian regimes like China’s, most of those that are are not publicly accessible. Apart from a limited number of official policy documents, therefore, I had to rely on the following:

- Papers that I could presume to be written by, or on instructions from, officials. Administrative leaders of key social science research institutes in a particular field—like, for my topic, Professor Zhuang Guotu, Deputy Director of the Southeast Asia Research Institute of Amoy University—usually do not represent their own views, but those officially accepted by the political leadership. Other researchers, when writing in authoritative journals—in this case, *Huaqiao Huaren Lishi Yanjiu* (*Overseas Chinese History Studies*)—also present views approved by the authorities. While these do not always directly formulate policy, they do indirectly reflect upon it.
- Comparative textual and visual (layout, use of images) analysis of the officially controlled media, particularly the main official national and provincial newspapers and television channels, as well as media directed at overseas Chinese.
- Observation of exchanges (personal, telephone, written communications) between officials and Chinese overseas; debriefing interviews with Chinese overseas about the content and form of such exchanges. Large-scale conferences organized either by Chinese overseas with officials attending or by the authorities in China for Chinese overseas are particularly good venues to observe the dynamic, symbolism, and rituals of exchange.

China’s attitude to emigration has historically oscillated between complete ban and attempts to engage migrants. During Mao’s “cultural revolution,” emigration was once again seen as treason. Relations with overseas Chinese were frozen, visits not allowed, and anyone with relatives overseas suspect as a “class enemy.”

Nyíri on the history of China – overseas Chinese relations

Traitors of the Empire

The cyclical nature of Chinese government attitude toward overseas Chinese has been noted by many authors and sometimes exaggerated. The Song (960–1279) and Yuan (1206–1368) dynasties banned emigration, seen as disloyalty to ancestors and ancestral land, and foresaw severe penalties for it. The Ming (1368–1644) dynasty relaxed the ban. But the last dynasty, the Qing (1644–1911), whose security was, at the beginning, threatened by Ming loyalists mounting resistance from overseas, not only repeated the ban, but cleared the coastal strip where sea communication with Ming loyalists was particularly active of population, ordering it to move inland. In 1603 and 1740, the Chinese court approved of mass killings of Chinese by Spanish and Dutch in the Philippines and the East Indies respectively on the grounds that the victims had committed the crime of leaving China (Yen 1985).

The 1860 Sino-British treaty granted Qing subjects the right to travel abroad for the first time, but the punishments foreseen for those who left China were not formally abolished until 1893. By this time, mass migration of Chinese contract laborers and merchants to Southeast Asia, North America, and South and East Africa had been taking place for several decades.

Members of the nation

The last two decades of Qing rule saw a major turnaround in official policy toward overseas Chinese, as the court discovered the financial resources of the diaspora and attempted to put them to use in its belated and half-hearted modernization program, especially in infrastructural and educational projects such as the building of roads, schools, and arsenals. To this end, loyalty to the Chinese Empire had to be rekindled among overseas Chinese who had until then been split into groups of speakers of mutually unintelligible dialects, for each of whom the locus of the homeland had been limited to its village, county, or at most province of origin, with which it had remained in touch. Chinese officials visited overseas Chinese leaders, opened missions, conducted censuses, and even attempted to collect taxes. Schools with instruction in the Mandarin, the official dialect of Chinese, were opened, replacing old ones that had taught in the pupils' native dialects, and teaching materials were imported from China. Often under the tutelage or with the direct participation of Chinese officials, organizations were created that united the different dialect groups and purported to represent all Chinese in a given country. Chinese Chambers of Commerce were sometimes headed by Chinese officials and vested with consular powers.

Kang Youwei (1858–1927), the leader of monarchist reformers, formulated the first modern ideology of Chinese nationalism and nation-state under the Qing. Contrary to the mainstream of Chinese political tradition, in which Chineseness had been defined as belonging to a civilization as expressed by "orthopraxy" (Watson 1985), i.e., accepting and practicing a set of tenets of propriety, Kang stressed common ancestry and race, borrowing popular eugenic theories from the West to establish a hierarchy of races. The new-found importance of blood was reflected in the 1909 nationality law, which introduced the principle of the *jus sanguinis*.

Kang spoke only of the "yellow race," but his antimonarchist followers introduced the concept of the nation, for which they borrowed a Japanese term, and based it on a largely ethnic foundation, excluding from it the ruling Manchus. Thus, the struggle to topple the dynasty was phrased in ethnonationalist terms as often as it was justified by

republican ideals. Like the late Qing's attempts to make "Chinese into citizens," the new nationalist discourse of Chineseness was popularized among overseas Chinese before it had reached significant masses in China itself. **Sun Yat-sen's** antimonarchist organization, which later became the **Kuomintang**, was organized mainly among, and sustained by funds from, overseas Chinese in Japan, Hawaii, and Southeast Asia. Branches of the Kuomintang and its affiliate (e.g. women's) organizations, often in contravention to colonial laws, continued to operate in those and other countries after the party came to power in China.

Sun Yat-sen's Republic of China (proclaimed in 1911) institutionalized the inclusion of overseas Chinese in the political nation it desired to build. It provided them with passports, established Overseas Chinese Commissions at national, provincial, and local levels, gave overseas Chinese voting rights, and appointed overseas Chinese delegates to national and provincial legislatures. The government closely controlled overseas Chinese organizations. For example, each of the seven lineage organizations that formed the Zhonghua Huiguan in San Francisco had leaders dispatched from China, who were authorized to do consular work and until 1923 carried diplomatic passports (Li 1995). On the other hand, overseas Chinese organizations were active in initiating policy proposals addressed to the central and provincial Chinese governments advancing the interests of their *qiaoxiang* (migrant homelands), and these proposals were often critical of the government.

China was now officially considered a unitary nation of five ethnic groups: the Han Chinese, the Manchus, the Mongols, the Muslims, and the Tibetans. Members of the four non-Han ethnic groups residing abroad were also included in the concept of "overseas Chinese," but the discourse of the nation and the usage of the term *minzu*, sometimes meaning "nation" and sometimes standing closer to "ethnic group," remained confused. Children in overseas Chinese schools were told that they were "sons and grandsons of the Yellow Emperor and the Emperor Yan" and belonged to "the black-haired race." Overseas Chinese invested and donated significant amounts, both in their ancestral areas in southeastern China and in urban centers such as Shanghai. The Japanese invasion of China took both overseas Chinese nationalism and the influx of financial support to its high point.

While the **Kuomintang** government's policies remained in place after its flight to Taiwan in 1949, the Chinese Communists gained overseas supporters as well. Overseas Chinese could now choose between passports of the Republic of China (ROC) and the People's Republic of China. Initially, Beijing's policy attempted to balance between dispelling the suspicions of nationalist Southeast Asian governments, which it regarded as potential allies, and keeping overseas Chinese investors on its side. On the one hand, the PRC declared in 1955 that it encouraged either the voluntary expatriation or the return of overseas Chinese—dual citizenship was not allowed—and in case of expatriation, discouraged them from joining overseas Chinese organizations. On the other hand, it treated those who chose to remain its citizens courteously, not wishing to lose their remittances, and created a system of its own organs of overseas Chinese affairs, structured similarly to that of the ROC.

Relations cooled after the Communist government nationalized overseas Chinese-owned enterprises, and froze after the 1957 Anti-Rightist Campaign, the beginning of mass terror targeting anyone with overseas contacts as class enemies or agents of imperialism. As in other state socialist regimes, travel abroad was severely restricted. Although contacts never ceased completely—a low level of migration from China and clandestine visits by overseas relatives continued even at the height of the Cultural Revolution, and those who repatriated were settled at "overseas Chinese farms"—many overseas Chinese chose at this time to adopt the citizenship of their country of residence. The tendency

toward naturalization, acculturation, and shifting the locus of overseas Chinese politics away from the home country and—where allowed to do so—toward the host country was aided by the absence of diplomatic relations between the PRC and most Southeast Asian countries, nationalist projects and anticommunism of the countries of residence, and economic development that offered ethnic Chinese a stable livelihood.

Revival of overseas Chinese policy in the reform era

After Mao's death and the beginning of reforms, the government of the PRC became, once again, interested in investments and donations by overseas Chinese. Like the **Kuomintang**, it set out to combine the involvement of overseas Chinese in domestic politics with an increasing promotion of nationalism, even though it never renounced the doctrine of supporting their voluntary expatriation and continued to encourage ethnic Chinese to be loyal to their countries of citizenship (dual citizenship remained disallowed).

New institutional framework

A number of political bodies* have been revived or created after 1977 for the dual purpose of dealing with overseas Chinese (supposedly only with *huaqiao*—Chinese citizens overseas—but in fact often with ethnic Chinese citizens of other countries) and protecting the interests of returned overseas Chinese and family members of overseas Chinese in China, who had experienced severe repression in the preceding period. In 1990, measures of protecting the interests of returned overseas Chinese and family members of overseas Chinese were enshrined in law, granting them special benefits. Today, most important among these is a special quota in admissions to institutions of higher education, which is a significant advantage in the highly competitive Chinese education system.

In 1994, the Qiaolian (All-China Federation of Returned Overseas Chinese) had over 8,000 branches and affiliated mass organizations at various levels (as reported in *Guangdong Qiaobao*, 18 June 1998, p. 1). People's Political Consultative Conferences (PPCC) at various levels also have many overseas Chinese delegates. In particularly important areas of emigration, *qiaoxiang* in Chinese, other organs also deal with overseas Chinese. For example, in Xinhui County, a famous *qiaoxiang* in Canton Province, these are the United Front Work Department of the city party committee, the city Qiaoban (Overseas Chinese Affairs Bureau), Qiaolian, and Overseas Chinese Commission, a People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, the trade union,

* The National Association of Overseas Chinese, Returned Overseas Chinese, and Dependent Overseas Chinese (*Quanguo Huaqiao Guiqiao Qiaojuan Lianhehui*, abbreviated as *Qiaolian*); the Overseas Chinese Commission (*Huaqiao Wei Yuanhui*, abbreviated as *Qiaoweihui*) of the National People's Congress; the Overseas Chinese Affairs office (*Qiaoban*) of the State Council; the China Overseas Exchange Commission, affiliated with the Qiaoban; and the provincial-, city-, county-, and even district (*qu*)-level are the equivalents of these bodies.

the youth federation, the women's federation, and the departments of culture, education, propaganda, civil affairs, foreign trade, customs. In another important qiaoxiang, Jinjiang in Fujian, there is, in addition to the usual institutions, a *Qiaoxiang* Construction Commission and a Leading Group on Overseas Chinese Donations for Welfare Facilities, headed by Party and city government leaders (Cheng and Ngok 1998).

Reaching out to overseas Chinese

The main task of the bodies in charge of overseas Chinese was attracting overseas Chinese investment—which accounts for the majority of foreign investment in mainland China—and what was inseparable from this, winning back the confidence and loyalty of overseas Chinese. This task became especially urgent in 1989, when, in the aftermath of the Tiananmen Square crackdown, China faced a freeze of Western investment and an economic recession. Thus, Peking started sending delegations to visit overseas Chinese organizations and influential individuals. These are not always government delegations but can take the form of informal groups from mass organizations, business delegations, or even tour groups. The emphasis in overseas visits of top party and government officials from the provinces and municipalities is frequently on visiting overseas Chinese communities.

Sending out delegations

The number of delegations sent abroad by bodies in charge of overseas Chinese has been growing rapidly. In 1991, various overseas Chinese authorities in Canton province sent abroad 381 delegations comprising 2,093 individuals. In 1995, they dispatched 526 delegations involving 21,966 people (Cheng and Ngok 1998). The zeal of officials to travel abroad with expenses paid may have contributed as much to this growth as their eagerness to foster relations with overseas Chinese; I have heard many a delegation leader ask the question, "What's there to see here?" in Budapest and Brussels. In 1993–95, the PRC government issued several prohibitions on such travel, but since obtaining a tourist visa for a PRC citizen is well-nigh impossible, even on an organized tour, this leaves Chinese with no choice but to abuse the institution of trade delegations.

In Europe in particular, delegations almost invariably engage in sightseeing trips, typically accompanied by representatives of local overseas Chinese associations. It is understandable that Rome is the most popular destination: the Federation of Chinese Associations in Rome received over 270 official Chinese delegations in 1998! (Interview with Chen Tiequn, vice-president of the federation, Rome, 1999.) Although Europe still plays third fiddle behind Southeast Asia and North America as far as overseas Chinese affairs bodies are concerned, interest in engaging Chinese in Europe is rising as the economic turnaround in Southeast Asia is affecting the willingness of Chinese there to invest in their *qiaoxiang*.

Inviting delegations

The authorities also invite overseas Chinese association leaders and other influential personalities to visit the old country with expenses paid. On such occasions, the visitors are introduced to new developments and received by party and government officials; their comments and advice are solicited; and investment negotiations are initiated. When making these invitations, the PRC bodies first evaluate the investment potential and plans of the persons invited.

Altogether in 1995, overseas Chinese bureaus in Fujian received more than 500 overseas Chinese delegations comprising 70,000 people, while their counterparts in Canton province received 3,087 groups of overseas Chinese and Chinese from Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Macau totaling a staggering 270,514 people (Cheng and Ngok 1998).

Cheng and Ngok on the tactics of overseas Chinese affairs organs

The organs for overseas Chinese affairs probably [have] a long list and a short list, the former is for general reference based on long-term careful gathering of information, and the latter is associated with an annual plan, or an action programme with a defined time horizon. Considerable efforts are involved in studying the background of the target famous overseas persons ... from the target's daily habits, diet, networks of relatives ... [to] values, etc.

The [organs] will have to map out a plan to ... gradually persuade him to accept an invitation to visit his hometown. It is usually important to ... secure his confidence through someone he trusts. It is important to understand the target's values so that the appropriate incentives will be offered. In sum, this is united front work and the Communist Party of China has a tradition and ample expertise in this area.

If those who can make decisions are not sympathetic, then the [organs] will have to work on the sympathetic leaders... In the last resort, [they] may have to cultivate another less respectable *qiaoxiang* association. Skilful officials ... take care to foster a competitive atmosphere so that their invitations become an honour to be sought after (Cheng and Ngok 1998).

Although taking part in such delegations cannot be considered active participation in Chinese domestic politics and can be motivated by commercial interest in many cases, the fact is nonetheless that dealing with PRC authorities has become the norm for a large number of overseas Chinese individuals and organizations.

Some programs for overseas Chinese visitors, primarily youth, last several months to "visit the homes of their ancestors to search for their roots... to uphold the fine tradition of the sons and grandsons of Emperor Yan and the Yellow Emperor. Online family-connecting services [Overseas] Chinese organizations have unquestionably played an important role from encouraging young people to apply to organizing groups to financing such programmes" (Li 1995). In 1994, authorities in Canton province organized 25 summer and winter camps for overseas Chinese youth while Fujian authorities organized 13 summer camps (Cheng and Ngok 1998).

Publications

The number of publications for overseas Chinese has also soared, with Canton and Fujian provincial authorities combined producing almost 190 with a total annual overseas circulation of over two million, mostly free and postage-paid. Between 1990 and 1994, the circulation of such publications produced by Fujian authorities grew from 390,000 to 1,410,000 (Cheng and Ngok 1998).

PRC authorities have espoused the cause of mother-tongue education for overseas Chinese children, typically an important issue for parents, control over which has long remained an area of competition between the two Chinese governments. The People's Daily Overseas Edition has started a column and organized summer camps to teach overseas Chinese children Chinese characters. The PRC embassy in Belgium convened a meeting of the "preparatory commission of the Brussels Chinese-language school" in 1998. (In fact, Brussels has several Chinese schools, but the most important of them, the Zhongshan School, is sponsored by the ROC government, although recently immigrated PRC nationals' children also attend it.)

Support for organizations

Beijing has provided varying degrees of encouragement and sponsorship in the setting up of Chinese organizations abroad for the purpose of "supporting China's development." These organizations often register with PRC authorities, are visited by and visit PRC officials, and participate in meetings organized by PRC authorities. When overseas Chinese associations hold anniversary celebrations or congresses, they usually receive some delegations as well as scores of congratulatory telegrams from PRC authorities, which are read aloud.

Zhuang Guotu, a senior scholar of overseas Chinese in the PRC who is also involved in various overseas Chinese affairs organs and can be seen as representing the official point of view, writes that "by the active promotion of the local governments (in China) such organizations appeared one after the other, partly due to the competition of local governments and also due to the enthusiasm of the Overseas Chinese leaderships." "The new emigrants have been encouraged to organize associations based on the same academic field (!) and area of origin in China," so as to correspond to the PRC's administrative structure (Zhuang 2000).

Provincial authorities in Canton, Fujian, and Zhejiang have also been participating in organizing activities on behalf of overseas Chinese organizations, in particular, assisting in the intensifying process of forging global links. In 1994, the Canton provincial overseas Chinese affairs authorities organized a World Mei [surname] Kinship Conference, a World Panyu [native-place] Kinship Conference, and the Twelfth World Hakka Kinship Conference. Over 4000 delegates took part in a Teochew congress in Swatow in November 1997 (Liu 1998). Most of these congresses have nominally been initiated by overseas Chinese, but organized and quite strictly controlled by the authorities when held in China.

Festivals and demonstrations

Apart from sending and receiving delegations, organizing festivities on Chinese holidays are an important part of the activities of overseas Chinese organizations. The PRC embassy is often involved in the preparation of such activities, which are attended by embassy officials and sometimes serve as occasions to communicate the PRC's political messages, particularly regarding the "unification of the motherland," i.e., the reincorporation of Taiwan.

In the run-up to elections on Taiwan in 2000, the PRC issued a "white paper," which threatened Taiwan with war if its government declared independence. Embassies organized briefings to explain it to invited representatives of Chinese organizations. Following the briefing, the Hungarian Chinese Association convened a "seminar" discussing the white paper and condemned proindependence views. The former president of the Hungarian Chinese Association and of the European Federation of Chinese Organizations is now organizing a Europe-wide "Committee for the Peaceful Reunification of the Two Sides of the Taiwan Strait." The United Front Department of the Chinese Communist Party has been involved in disseminating information on the project to Chinese organizations in Europe.

Efforts to reinstitutionalize contacts between Peking and the overseas Chinese have been accompanied by the revival of a nationalist discourse similar to that used between the two world wars, but adapted to the fact that most Chinese overseas are now foreign citizens. The director of the national Qiaoban noted in 1986 that *huaren* (foreign citizens who are ethnic Chinese) are "not only much more in number than *huaqiao* (Chinese citizens abroad), but also have much more advantages in financial resources, talented persons, and relations with Taiwan. Therefore, the *huaren* should be the main object at work on Overseas Chinese" (Zhuang 2000).

Without officially changing the government's policy principles, media reporting on the overseas Chinese has been put to the service of a triumphalist, unificatory, and mobilizing myth of Chineseness as an eternal cultural condition inherited with blood and, regardless of citizenship, naturally carrying "Chinese values" such as love for the family, subordination of the individual to the collective interest, diligence, and frugality, and thus resulting in superior business results. In this reporting, previously rigidly separated categories of *huaqiao*, *huaren* (ethnic Chinese), and *huayi* (person of Chinese ancestry) are conflated, and the usual term now is *huaren*, sometimes qualified as *waiji huaren* (ethnic Chinese with foreign citizenship). This discourse combines culturalist and racist arguments with the lingo of Western business schools.

The new migrant discourse

Reviving contacts with old overseas Chinese communities has been a long and carefully executed process for the PRC authorities. But since 1978 and especially 1985, the year when a law liberalizing travel abroad was adopted, millions of new migrants have left the Chinese mainland to study, join relatives, work, or trade abroad. They, many of them urban, had never broken ties with the authorities. Most had accumulated some social capital in the form of connections they had used to smooth the administration of their departure. In the interest of their business' success, and then increasingly with the degree of this success, they worked even harder on expanding these connections thereafter.

Pragmatic official parlance

As Zhuang Guotu writes, "two changes have attracted the attention of the Chinese government from 1978 onward. One is the Overseas Chinese wealth, and the other is the new Chinese emigrants" (Zhuang 2000). People who have left China since 1978, regardless of the purpose of their departure and of their status as huaqiao, huaren, or even students returned from abroad, are now often referred to in official parlance as "new migrants" or "new emigrants" (*xin yimin*). This pragmatic usage recognizes that once a person has left the PRC she is unlikely to return permanently, at least without having established a social space abroad to which to return in the future. While such a use of the term "migrant" reflects the reality of modern migratory phenomena better than official Western usage, it reflects, at the same time, the long way the Chinese Communist government has come from the "normal" paradigm of state socialism that considered talking about emigration in terms other than defection tantamount to admitting its own failure.

This turnaround is reflected in a new type of lowbrow popular narrative that is examined below. At the same time, a distinctive official discourse has also emerged around the "new migrants" that recognizes them as a highly useful resource for economic construction in China, the attraction of foreign investors and business partners. They are also seen as the new leadership of overseas Chinese communities in Japan, the US, and Europe, which are judged as losing touch with the homeland and Chinese culture. This discourse, which involves arguments of development, modernity and patriotism, is reflected in a series of publications by officials in the overseas Chinese studies journals *Overseas Chinese History Studies* (*Huaqiao Huaren Lishi Yanjiu*) and *Overseas Chinese History of Bagui* (*Bagui Qiaoshi*) as well as other periodicals. These articles state that since the late 1980s, the Qiaoban and the foreign affairs ministry have issued directives on strengthening new migrant work. In one article in *Fujian Qiaobao*, new migrants from Mingxi are portrayed as people who want to become modern (*zou xiang shijie*, they "march toward the world") and contribute to the development of the homeland: "Thanks to benefits provided by Mingxi County, the column of new migrants going to Europe that grows day after day plays an important role in the construction of the homeland" (Zhang 1997).

Another article (significant because an anonymous work team wrote it clearly on instructions from the Qiaoban and the Public Security Bureau) recommends the provision of better services to migrants such as the establishment of municipal migration service centers. It quotes the State Council's "Opinion on unfolding new migrant work" (*Guanyu kaizhan xin yimin gongzuo di yijian*, probably 1995):

Since reform and opening, people who have left mainland China to reside abroad (called "new migrants" for short) have continuously been more numerous. They are currently rising as an important force within overseas Chinese and ethnic Chinese communities. In the future, they will become a backbone of forces friendly to us in America and some other developed Western countries (Shanghai New Migrants Research Project Team 1997).

From treacherous to patriotic

In the 1980s, students abroad were sometimes still criticized as unpatriotic, and their host countries as “brain plunderers.” After **Tiananmen**, the United States and Australia were attacked for providing them asylum. By now, in just over two decades, the nature of emigration has turned from treacherous to tolerated but ideologically suspect to patriotic. Even former asylum seekers, who claim that the Chinese government persecuted them, can now be seen as patriots. Once recognized as refugees, most of these migrants go back to China and cultivate contacts with authorities without being penalized. A delegation of Fujianese officials even met with asylum seekers in London in January 2000! Officials have mentioned “internal recommendations” that as long as the migrant has secured legal residence abroad, he should not receive prejudicial treatment because of having left the country illegally.

All of this shows that the state brokers of migration are thinking of migrants as people who remain part of the Chinese economy and polity, strengthen the ties of overseas Chinese to China, and, as highly skilled professionals and successful businesspeople, improve the standing of Chinese in their host societies. The language used to describe them is distinct from the culturalist, traditionalist language used in reportage about and for overseas Chinese. It is closer to the late Maoist language used in publications describing society in China, abounding in references to construction, modernization, and leadership, though both discourses are united by frequent references to patriotism. This difference enforces the sense that new migrants, unlike the old diaspora, are bound to China not only by ties of blood and culture but by sharing the modernizing goal of the state.

Conflicts between national and local politics

Investment from established overseas Chinese communities has accounted for the majority of foreign direct investment in China, and it is no exaggeration to say that China’s economic growth as we know it would have been impossible without it. Currently, however, authorities have an interest in new migrants as potential links to foreign (non-Chinese) investors as they feel the steam of overseas Chinese investment is running out; in addition, they see them, unlike “old overseas Chinese,” as capable of investing in high-tech industries.

Beyond the 1993 law that grants certain general protections to investments by overseas Chinese as well as by their family members in China using remittances from abroad, provincial and local authorities have room to establish their own policies to promote investment and trade. Shanghai began offering special investment benefits to “new migrants” in 1993. Within 8 months it attracted 95 high-tech companies established by them (Zhu 1995). Shanghai, Peking, Xi’an and other cities established *liuxuesheng chuangyeyuan* (in the official translation, “High-Tech Parks for Returned Students Making Great Industry and Business”) (Li 2002).

The argument that it is the PRC’s policy to encourage emigration to alleviate unemployment and generate revenue is shared by numerous scholars. Meanwhile, ideas of a deliberate “demographic expansion” by China as well as revived fifth-col-

umn theories—seeing overseas Chinese as a political pawn that can be mobilized by the Chinese government in international conflicts—are on the rise in various quarters: among politicians in the Russian Far East, journalists in Southeast Asia, and sometimes in US media, as in the recent spying case of Chinese-American physicist Wen Ho Lee. In this view, increasing (or so perceived) migration from China and/or resurgent Chinese nationalism overseas is clearly linked to the PRC's great-power aspirations.

The multiplicity of state agency

Such views fail to take into account the complexity of state agency vis-à-vis migrants. Other sending countries of migrants, such as Mexico, El Salvador, or the Philippines, have utilized migration in ways strikingly similar to the PRC, and provided more overt support for the migration projects of their citizens. Mexican government agencies have not just encouraged the establishment of hometown associations by Mexican migrants in the United States but have created schemes under which every dollar donated by such an association for the development of the hometown is matched by one, two, or three dollars of state money (*Migration News* 2000). El Salvador's government has dispatched agents to help migrants to the United States apply for political asylum on the grounds of being persecuted by that very government. In the Philippines, a debate is emerging on granting undocumented Filipinos abroad voting rights. In each case, the ratio of migrants to the total population is much higher than in China. Yet, for obvious reasons of size and general political mistrust, the Chinese case is surrounded by much greater suspicions. Whereas in federal systems with elected governments, such as Mexico, the multiplicity of state agency is taken for granted, it is customary to treat the PRC as a single agent and to overlook the agency of local and provincial administrations pursuing their interests. It is also customary to disregard the agency of overseas Chinese elites themselves wishing to gain access to economic and social capital.

In fact, the interests of central authorities differ from those of the provinces and the lower rungs of the administration. There also are conflicts of interest between departments (overseas Chinese affairs versus foreign affairs). Typically, higher-level organs will be more concerned with the negative effects of migration, such as flight of assets and the damage illegal migration and, in some cases, low-quality goods sold by Chinese in Eastern Europe does to the reputation of China and Chinese products abroad. Local political elites have a more direct, and purely economic, interest in migration and overseas Chinese. Like in any other business, local political elites are keen to have a share in it, both on behalf of the state and their own. Officials in areas with greater foreign investment express doubts about doing business with new migrants, referring to past negative experiences. An official at the Putian County Foreign Economic Relations Commission said, "they call themselves European this and Eastern European that, but in the end there was only one of them that we trusted." He said that they were more interested in attracting "foreign," i.e., non-Chinese, capital.

There may also be conflicts between branches of the bureaucracy, such as foreign affairs organs (which have to fend off diplomatic problems arising from illegal migration and accusations of "demographic expansionism" in Russia) versus overseas Chi-

nese affairs organs (whose influence grows with the growth of the diaspora), while foreign economic relations organs may take an in-between stand. Finally, there may be conflicts even within the overseas Chinese affairs apparatus.

The nation-state and migration

It has been acknowledged that while migration weakens the state, transnational links can work to extend it. The deterritorialization of the nation-state can actually make it stronger. This is particularly so in cases like China's, where most migrants have experienced little institutional or discursive participation in the practice of citizenship before they left. The state, with its institutions, symbols, and officials, is frequently less involved in the everyday life of a peasant than of a migrant. Furthermore, while a migrant may have felt disenfranchised by the status quo as a farmer, worker, or state employee in China, he acquires a vested interest in it as an entrepreneur abroad who sees a hope for his fortunes and his recognition in forging relations with the elite at home. Finally, a migrant has more opportunity to make his views heard at home through migrant-produced media without going beyond the realm tolerated by the government. Both of these topics are discussed in more detail in the following sections.

**Glick Schiller, Basch and Szanton
Blanc on the deterritorialized
nation-state see p. 109**

But the celebration of migrants by sending states—not just China—is now in its honeymoon stage. Migrants revel in newfound recognition as patriots, and significantly, unlike migrants from other countries, are reaping economic benefits rather than simply being donors. It is a question when Chinese migrants, like their Mexican counterparts whose support for Vicente Fox helped end the 71-year rule of the Institutional Revolutionary Party, will demand a real say in the political process. Economic changes in China—such as a general slowdown or lowered competitiveness of Chinese products abroad—can bring this moment forward.

Producing the global imagery of new Chineseness overseas: the media

In the previous sections I focused on the creation of the “new migrant” discourse by the state. Here I would like to explore how the imaginary of the new migrant as embodiment of a new, modern and triumphant Chineseness is propagated. Who is involved in its creation and perpetuation and why?

To what extent does the Chinese state's official discourse on “new migrants” shape the image of a globally successful Chinese patriot? What is the role of migrants themselves? How is identity construction among recent migrants manipulated by elites that participate in this imagining process? Finally, are foreign and Chinese academics riding on the wave of interest in global Chineseness themselves contributing to it? This last point, of course, also addresses a general question about the distinguishability of the researcher from her field, an assumption regarded as axiomatic—but increasingly questionable—in Western scholarship but still not an aim in the bulk of Chinese social studies.

New migrant media as producers

Official narratives of new migrants as patriots contributing to the development of their home country are being promoted and amplified by the media. Chinese globalization may have been relying mainly on personal communication, but is rapidly becoming mediated: in the second half of the 1990s, not only various commercial television channels but also China Central Television (CCTV) has begun broadcast-

Schein on mediated transnationalism see pp. 128–139

ing via satellite. In Hungary, nearly every Chinese I have spoken to regularly watches CCTV and Chinese Channel, the first Chinese satellite station broadcasting specifically for Europe.

Driven by higher education levels as well as greater access to news and multimedia, the growth of media run by new Chinese migrants has been much more rapid than in earlier periods. In Hungary, there currently are eight or nine Chinese-language periodicals for a Chinese population of around 10,000. In Japan, more than ten new Chinese-language papers were launched in 1997–98, and a Chinese-language television channel began broadcasting in late 1999 (Tajima 2000).

New migrant media share a remarkably standard content, style, and layout. The style of new migrant newspapers is strongly influenced by the 'ideologemes' of PRC officialese. For instance, during a time of heightened US–Chinese tensions, in 2000–01, front pages of three different Chinese papers published in Budapest sported headlines such as US: ESCHEWING WAR ON ONE HAND, PREPARING FOR WAR ON THE OTHER (Meiguo: yimian zai bimian zhanzheng, yimian zai zhunbei zhanzheng; *OuYa Xinwenbao*, 17–24 July 2000), "CHINA THREAT THEORY" CANNOT THREATEN CHINA ("Zhongguo weixie lun" weixiebuliao Zhongguo; *Zhonghua Shibao*, 21–27 September 2000) and TURN PATRIOTIC FERVOUR INTO NATIONAL POWER (Ba aiguo reqing huawei qiangguo lilian; *Shijie Qiaobao*, 15 April 2001). Shared layout includes the wording and positioning of and choice of fonts for titles and subtitles, the kinds of photos (ranging from protocol pictures of leaders to soft-core pornography), and so on. Although this style has been seeping into established overseas Chinese newspapers, there is still a gap between the two kinds of publications in terms of both their language and layout.

New migrant media contribute to the construction of a 'global Chinese' identity with shared values, raising cultural Chineseness and transnational modernity in importance above the immediate environment the reader happens to be in. This global orientation becomes obvious from the titles of Chinese papers in Hungary. Six of them emphasize Chineseness, Europeaness/globality, or both: *Ouzhou zhi Sheng* (Voice of Europe), *Ouzhou Daobao* (European Herald), *Zhonghua Shibao* (China Times), *OuYa Xinwenbao* (European–Chinese News Weekly), *Shijie Qiaobao* (literally World Overseas Chinese News, English title: The World Press), *OuHua Luntan* (European Chinese Forum). Three have neutral titles: *Lianhe Shangbao* (United Commercial News), *Shichang* (Markets), *Xin Daobao* (New Herald). And only one, *Budapeisi Wanbao* (Budapest Evening News), has a title that refers to where it is published.



Fig. 6.1. *Worldwide Chinese (Tianxia Huaren)* is published in London, and

Fig. 6.2. *Who's Who of Chinese Origin Worldwide (Shijie Huaren Mingrenlu)* by the World Chinese Press in Budapest.

There are magazines conceived expressly with a ‘global Chinese’ positioning; some of them are produced in Hong Kong, others in the US; The latter has the slogan ‘Saluting the Descendants of the Dragon, saluting the Chinese race.’ *Who’s Who* is formatted as a society magazine, with a price somewhat higher than *Cosmopolitan*’s. It contains interviews with personalities ranging from the ethnic Chinese Governor-General of Canada through overseas Chinese businessmen and artists to party officials and generals in the PRC; the one thing most of them have in common is having been photographed with high PRC officials as well as local dignitaries (preferably presidents). Apart from advertisements of luxury hotels in Budapest and the address on the colophon, there is no indication that the magazine has anything to do with Hungary. It is in Chinese, with an editorial in English, and carries a price tag in US dollars, marks, and renminbi.

All papers have a page devoted to overseas Chinese in the world. These pages offer fiction and reporting that frequently depict the dynamic, resourceful, transnational Chinese businessman. They portray the experiences of Chinese in their countries of residence in a humorous way, or report on atrocities committed against Chinese (from rapes and murder in Indonesia to the spying case of Wen Ho Lee, the Chinese-American physicist). The newspapers also report on contributions of local Chinese and Chinese elsewhere to donation drives in China intended to build schools, bridges, or roads. In the same official terms of patriotism and development, the papers describe the visits to China by local Chinese organizations to participate in congresses and state celebrations.

The World Press has two such pages: “News from Chinatown” and “Chinese Overseas.” The titles of one day, 15 April 2001, provide a picture of the Chinese universe the paper projects:

The six times I cried in America

Canadian committee for the defense of truth in the history of the anti-Japanese war strongly protests Japanese attempts to re-write history

My views on "seeing money and not taking it" in Germany

Mad growth rate of Chinese with Vanuatu passports

What kind of new immigrants can easily find work in Canada

Chinese-American Youth's trip to China's six ancient capitals' Summer camp

Asian-Americans reach 1.2 million

Going back to Hong Kong with mainland passport needs visa

Hong Kong and Macau members of China's Association of Overseas Chinese, Overseas Chinese leaders visit Yunnan

Chinese in Hungary commiserate with victims, condemn NATO's hegemonic behavior

Ugandan Chinese support Chinese government's strong stand

By presenting a homogenized worldwide Chineseness, the papers simultaneously reproduce the Chinese/foreign dichotomy and re-"other" the foreign. Chinese and Western globalizations are pitted against each other. On news pages, America in particular is portrayed as China's adversary scheming to prevent China's assumption of its rightful international stature, with articles often carrying Cold War-style titles like "The bankruptcy of America's new anti-Chinese show" (on the Wen Ho Lee case, in *Zhonghua Shibao*, 23 December 1999). The same issue carried an article titled "America, breeding-ground of heretical sects," implying support for the view that the Falungong sect was financed out of America as another subversive tool.

At the same time, the papers are keen to participate in the discussion of hot topics from American society and media pages. For example, *Europe-Asia News Weekly* published Monica Lewinsky's autobiography. Belligerence against the Anglo-Saxon West is thus linked to voyeurism of the Anglo-Saxon West, primarily America.

The similarity of content is in part a technical necessity as newspapers usually work with a small staff and have to rely on the same pool of content from the internet. Most of the content and all political commentary in Chinese newspapers in Hungary comes from PRC-based websites. Yet the range of opinions expressed in reporting on sensitive political issues—including any coverage of Chinese or American politics, and particularly the Taiwan issue or NATO's bombing of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade—is, in fact, more narrowly aligned with the *People's Daily* line than what is tolerated in PRC media. The reasons for such uniformity will be explored toward the end of this block.

"New migrant" versus "overseas Chinese"

"New migrant" media evoke not simply a transnational overseas Chinese world, but more specifically a transnational discourse of the new migrant, fascinated with the West, concerned with the techniques of migration, sensitive to discrimination, and preoccupied with "national power." There is little of the traditional, locally focused reporting on overseas Chinese organizations, charities, social events and so on.

The papers are eager to distance the modernity of the new migrants from the ambivalent image of traditional overseas Chinese. The latter, in the eyes of 'metropolitan'—northern-oriented—PRC culture, is a group that, despite having served as a bridge to the West for a long time, has never fully shed its stain of boorishness inherent in its rural Southern origins and is not seen as sufficiently authentically Chinese, modern, global, or mobile.

In an interview in *Shijie Rongyin* ("Worldwide Voice of Fuqing," published in Hong Kong), the president of the Melbourne Fuqing Association said:

In Australia, Chinese immigrants are divided into new and old immigrants. ... New immigrants refers to those that came since 1988–1989. Old immigrants refers to those who came over from Southeast Asia. It is impossible to discuss old immigrants together with new immigrants. Old immigrants, once they have finished washing gold, will certainly send it home; they will just have a simple abode in Australia, not caring about getting involved in local social life. Therefore twenty years ago, Chinese were considered the most backward ethnic group in Australia.

New migrants have all received higher education; they have a strong ability to live here and develop quickly. ... Last year, in a comparison of over 200 ethnic groups in Australia, the Chinese community rose to fifth place. ("Zheng Changhou tan Aozhou Rong-qing" [Zheng Changhou about Fuqing fellowship in Australia], *Shijie Rongyin*, June 2001, p. 17.)

In this social Darwinist construct, division between Chinese migrants from Southeast Asia and mainland China is commuted into a time division, where mainland Chinese are newer and more skilled thus more modern. This, of course, glosses over the fact that many new mainland Chinese migrants are unskilled and often illegal, while many Southeast Asian Chinese are recent professional migrants or investors in "modern" businesses like real estate. This narrative also reverses the actual social hierarchy in Australia, in which Southeast Asian Chinese enjoy more prestige and acceptance than mainland Chinese.

Consider another example. When asked how his project was different from old China-towns, Song Wuqiang, the man in charge of a project to build the Asia Center in Budapest, heralded as the largest shopping center in Europe, answered characteristically:

The old generation of migrants was, in some ways, passive... The Asia Center's site has been selected after having studied the investment and market environment of various countries ... [It is] based on large-scale modern trade ... The Asia Center is an active initiative, not a bigger or smaller market that serves the livelihood of strangers in a foreign land. ("Yazhou Zhongxin Asia Center," *Zhonghua Shibao*, 20–26 July 2000, p. 1.)

Portrait of a "successful new migrant"

The excerpt below, from an article on Howard Li in Who's Who of Chinese Origin Worldwide (Shijie Huaren Mingrenlu, Budapest, 4/2000, p. 30), a garment manufacturer, importer, and warehouse owner based in New York, in a magazine published in Budapest, is a typical depiction of a 'successful new migrant'.

The new century is the century of the knowledge economy. Howard Li has included the Web in his vision. (...) He worked with the influential Chinese-language Qiaobao to create 'Meiguo Qiaowang' (American Overseas Chinese Net). At the same time, he established the headquarters of a Net-based goods exchange system in Hong Kong, set up service provider stations at Peking Airport and in Shenzhen. The backbone of a worldwide Web-based goods exchange with hubs in New York and Hong Kong has already been formed.



Howard Li with World Bank director James Wolfensohn and Bill Clinton

By now, his joint and exclusive ventures in China extend over more than 30 provinces, cities, and regions. He has helped Chinese goods conquer the American market. He has enthusiastically supported the revival of life and production of earthquake victims in East and South China and Yunnan. He has injected funds from abroad into China in order to promote the economic construction of the motherland. As a representative of Chinese overseas, he has been specially invited to the 50th anniversary National Day celebrations and the ceremony honoring Macau's return. ... He is also Chairman of the Asian-American Entrepreneurs Association, Honorary General Advisor of the New York Federation of Chinese Associations, and holder of forty or fifty other honors.

In *The World Press*, Song claimed no less than that "the Asia Center, while raising the international profile of Hungary, will also contribute to Hungary's Olympic application"! In other words, the new Chinese migrants are agents of a truly global modernizing mission that will benefit their destinations.

The new migrant in pop culture

The same tropes appear in the popular body of pulp fiction/reportage and soap operas that has taken off since *A Beijing Man in New York*, the classic by Cao Guilin, and have become known as "new migrant literature." The West, and the act of migration, are shown as a locus of seduction and modernity.

Barmé on the series A Beijing Man in New York

in Barmé 1999, pp. 275–276.

A Beijing Man in New York was the first mainland television series filmed entirely on location overseas. It was also the first show of its type that attempted to reflect the fate of recent mainland immigrants to the West, being based on Glen Cao's (Cao Guilin) popular book of the same name, a work that had created a frenzy of interest when it was first serialized and broadcast on radio in 1991.

Cao's "novel" was only one of a number of books in a genre of mainland writing hailed as "new immigrant literature" following its appearance in the late 1980s. It constituted a widely read genre that, over the years, tended to confirm many popular stereotypes of the West as being a realm lacking the "human sentiment," *renqingwei'r*, that theoretically suffused Chinese life with a warmth, closeness, and compassion unknown to any other peoples. The West, pitiless to immigrants from Asia, was excessively materialistic, exploitative, and essentially racist, not to mention imperialistic vis-à-vis the Chinese. The general tone of these works, in particular Cao's book, also fortuitously fulfilled some of the needs of post-1989 propaganda—as well as satisfying popular curiosity and prurience. They depicted the horrors of Western capitalism at the same time as they affirmed the positive dimensions (rags to riches) of the market economy that China was pursuing with such single-mindedness.

Displays of modernity: breaking hierarchies

One sign of modernity is the breaking of age hierarchies and gender taboos associated with traditional overseas Chinese. In Chen Dian and Chen Mei's novel *Sheng he* (Sacred river; Beijing: Wenhua Yishu Chubanshe, 1997), the protagonist, Pan, meets a snakehead—a migration broker—on the plane to Budapest.



Upon arrival, the broker, who lead a group of Fujianese peasants from whom he had collected a fee, disappears. The deceived Fujianese hold Pan responsible, believing he is an accomplice. Pan is saved by an 18-year-old girl, Shanshan, the daughter of a Chinese entrepreneur and community leader, who comes to the airport to meet him. Shanshan drives a Mercedes-Benz SL and manages her father's restaurant. Pan confidently suggests to her that they look for the snakehead and get the peasants' money back by force. But Shanshan looks at him derisively:

Fig. 6.3. Chen Dian and Chen Mei, *Sheng He*

"I am asking you what you are planning to do now?" the lass said angrily. "We don't need you to fight!"

Pan Hua stared at her helplessly. (...)

"A dumb kid we got there..." the lass muttered. Pan Hua realized that she meant him and became red in the face (p. 26).

Shanshan's portrait is drawn with some irony, but with a great deal of triumphalism. She exemplifies the new generation of successful, modern, dynamic, and thoroughly global Chinese. While it often took decades for earlier generations of migrants to rise from washing dishes to opening their own little mom-and-pop restaurant, there are new migrants in Budapest and Rome who acquired several restaurants or workshops at a speed that required installing daughters in early twenties as managers while they negotiated outside or took care of trading. Shanshan's modernity is expressed not only in her business acumen and material requisites but also in her authority over locals: "Three Hungarian waiters in black vests and white shirts tiptoed up to Shanshan's chair from behind and quietly stood there with a nervous and earnest expression on their face" (p. 62).

An even more unequivocal reversal of gender hierarchies is in Mu Yunkai's story "Budapest, I hate you forever," published in a Chinese newspaper in Hungary. Here, however, it is shown as an undesirable result of the clash between moral values and the pursuit of modernity: the protagonist hates Budapest as the city that broke her family apart. She had come to Budapest ahead of her husband and child, and opened a stall at the market with the help of a cohabiting partner. Then she separated from him and arranged for her husband to come to Budapest. But he refused to help her with the business, and she put up with it because of the guilt she felt for the illicit relationship. He sold the market stalls she had bought but lost the money. In the story, she returns from New York to Budapest to rescue her former husband:

... He used to be rather masculine, but by now he had lost all semblance to a human. I took six thousand dollars out of my handbag, put them on the chair next to the bed, and said coldly: "This money is to pay your bills; otherwise, your life'd be over. I am giving you another five hundred dollars; buy a plane ticket and go back to Jinan. ... And this is the last time I helped you" (Mu Yunkai, "Hen Budapesti dao yongyuan," *OuYa Xinwenbao*, 1–8, 2001).

Displays of modernity: contrasts with "old" overseas Chinese

In the Southeast Fujian TV's soap opera *Zouru ouzhou* (*Into Europe*, 1999), based on A Hang's novel, director Chen Kemin shows a clash between the rules of family-managed migration from Qingtian, Zhejiang Province, a traditional sending area of migrants to Europe, with the individualism of the modern migrant. His sympathies are on the side of the latter. An "overseas Chinese family" agrees with their cousin in China that the cousin's daughter will come to Italy to marry their Italian-born son. The plot is kept secret from the girl, and after a clash with the host family she elopes, not with her original paramour who joined her in coming to Italy, but with the repentant snake-head who had stolen her passport.

The male protagonist of the film—the heroine's original boyfriend—arrives in Paris in a torn T-shirt without a penny. After a few months, he is a manager in a company owned by an 'old' overseas Chinese and proposes a plan to open a Chinese art gallery to a French art agent. In fluent French, he praises Chinese reforms and informs the Frenchman that he has already secured the support of the Chinese embassy and funding from China. The Frenchman, impressed, agrees. His status soon surpasses

that of his former benefactor and boss: the French-born granddaughter of the 'old' overseas Chinese man comes to him to ask for a job, but he rejects her as unqualified. Yet he does not stop at that, but proceeds to a more ambitious project. "Ladies and gentlemen!" he announces to his French audience, pointing to the drawing of a building complex with pagoda-style roofs. "What will be different on the new map of Paris two years from now? The beautiful banks of the Seine will be full of Oriental splendor: the Chinatown Investment and Trade Center!" The audience breaks into applause: the new Chinese shows the Western establishment the road to a new, Chinese modernity.

Most of the migrants I have interviewed had seen at least some of these soap operas either before migrating or afterwards, and many said they had influenced their image of the destination country. The soap operas and books project a normative myth of the new migrant that partly reflects what new migrants themselves wish to be seen like. This myth, in turn, informs potential migrants' and nonmigrants' expectations and offers migrants models of behavior.

Migrant elites as producers

Identity narratives of new migrant organizations

Most of these organization have been founded in the 1980s and 90s, many of them with the support from the PRC. The associations strive to be a bridge not only between their constituencies and local society, but also between China and the country of residence, and sometimes name specific areas of business they wish to promote or information services they offer. They receive and send delegations, organize fundraising drives to build schools and help flood victims in China, both in and outside the native-place area. Organizing festivities on traditional Chinese holidays and, increasingly, on state holidays of the PRC are another important part of the activities of overseas Chinese organizations' activities.

The associations' activities and discourses around the world are remarkably standardized. Even association premises are decorated with the same little banners and mementos received from Chinese government bodies and from each other and with photographs with Chinese officials.

A comparison of commemorative booklets

To test this observation, let us look at commemorative booklets issued by three organizations on the occasions of their respective anniversaries; The Fukien American Association (the largest association representing migrants from Fujian Province on the East Coast of the United States); the Algemene Chinese Vereniging (General Chinese Association); the largest association of migrants from Zhejiang Province in the Netherlands); the Association of Fujianese in Macau. All three comprise mainly new migrants.



Fig. 6.4. “Fujian Province Executive Vice Governor Zhang Jiakun receives an enthusiastic welcome from members of Fukien American Association during his visit to the United States”



Fig. 6.5. “Mr. Liang Hongji, Chairman of the 1981 National Day Celebration delivers his speech to the Algemene Chinese Vereniging”



Fig. 6.6. “Celebrating the 49th Anniversary of the Founding of the PRC and the Ninth Anniversary of the Association of Fujianese in Macau”

Economic expediency

The show of nationalism we see in both media and organizations is influenced by economic expediency. Newspaper owners also run other businesses that largely depend on access to goods, business information, and capital in China. Since such access is greatly influenced by relations with authorities, publishers do not wish to seem less loyal than their competitors.

Nyiri on why Chinese do business with Chinese

Although business networks between Chinese overseas and China are often described in terms of cultural affinity or loyalty, their formation and operation has to do with economic benefits as well as with power asymmetries. First, it is cheaper for Chinese entrepreneurs to hire employees in China than in Europe, and to employ family members than outsiders. Second, whereas they often dispose of **cultural capital** in China in the form of social position and connections, they encounter exclusion on ethnic and cultural basis when attempting to forge business contacts in the West.

Editors of a new-migrant newspaper in New Zealand, who have since moved to New York, say that their paper was denied advertisements by the local office of state-owned Air China when it displayed a critical attitude to the PRC government. They explained that newspapers, because they are usually sent to some overseas-Chinese affairs officials in China, were also often the first points of contact for government delegations. They could then farm out the lucrative business of accommodating, banqueting, and escorting the delegations to local Chinese companies and get a commission for it. This business too was closed to this couple due to the critical tone of their paper. But apart from such considerations, editors must see a reader desire to consume nationalism.

Demonstrating patriotism

At the time of the demonstrations against the NATO bombing of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade that swept across Europe and were reflected in Chinese newspaper headlines, I was in Bucharest, Romania. The news at the Europe Market, the center of Chinese commercial activity in Bucharest, was that the Romanian president—this is how it was told—did not allow a demonstration. The leaders of the three strongest Chinese associations then decided to hold a demonstration within the confines of the market. Their argument was that, in any case, they could take photos and send them back to China. Photos with high Chinese officials and newspaper articles commending someone for patriotism are assets of considerable importance when doing business or dealing with officials back in China.

Organization leaders I interviewed, from the President of the Fujian association in the Netherlands to the President of the Fuqing association in New York, invariably had such photos exhibited in their offices and showed me such articles. The self-serving nature of such displays has elicited similar criticism in places as diverse as New York and Rome. Stephen Wong, the President of the Lin Ze Xu Foundation in New York, who too had such photos on the walls of his office, said nonetheless in March 2001: “Many associations raise high the Five-Star Red Flag [of the PRC]. I tell them: you spend so much money on throwing parties for Chinese officials.” According to Wong, many associations exist for their leaders to take photos with Chinese Premier Zhu Rongji and use them in China to do business or *toudu*. He pointed to a photo in his office:

See, he has a picture with Zhu Rongji, but not even all provincial governor have taken photos with Zhu Rongji. Provincial officials are afraid of being caught for corruption. (Carrying such a photo is like saying:) I have good relations with Zhu Rongji; you give me money so I won’t tell him that you are corrupt. I take the money to Hong Kong, then back to Fujian. And drugs: to take drugs through customs. The customs agents put a “Re-checked” sticker on the baggage, and then even the Malaysian and Singaporean customs don’t bother opening them. And when the baggage came via Malaysia or Singapore, which have such strict drug laws, the US customs won’t bother opening them either. Or if a snakehead gets caught, a friend can take his photo (with a leader) to the local government: he is a patriotic overseas Chinese leader!

What Zhu Dinglong, a Chinese living in Italy, has to say about the Chinese association in Rome echoes this:

In Rome, there is a Chinese community association that is supported by our Embassy ... it does not task itself particularly with the affairs of the Chinese that live here. They do one single thing: when delegations from China visit, the Association pressures Chinese restaurants in the key cities to offer meals or money to contribute to the stay or the gifts made to these delegations. But what do all these Chinese that contribute one or two million [lire] a head stand to gain? They stand to gain good relations with the Embassy, they stand to gain in *guanxi*, or connections: if one of those Chinese who has put money on the table needs help later, the Embassy will certainly be more solicitous with him than with an ordinary Chinese. Furthermore, each time the supporters of the Association's activities get to go to Peking to take part in a meeting of *huaqiao* associations from all over the world, they may get the chance to have a photo taken with the top leaders and feel closer to the power (Zhu 1997).

Chen Tiequn, provisional chairman of the Fujian association in Italy, is quite candid about the instrumental nature of his organization as a receptacle of contacts with official China. He says the establishment of the *tongxianghui* was motivated by three factors. First, Fujian provincial leaders came to visit Italy and there was nobody to receive them formally. Second, every year there were world Fujianese congresses, and you couldn't go on select people randomly for these congresses as well as to represent Fujianese in Italy toward the province and embassy. Third, there was a need to explain to the embassy and the province "what kind of people the Fujianese in Italy were; otherwise they wouldn't know whether these people were engaged in legal or illegal business." (The embassy would not efficiently help individual applicants seeking to obtain proofs of identity required to obtain legal resident status in the regularization campaigns in Italy. The embassy would help when approached by the *tongxianghui* as an intermediary.)

Thus, we have an instrumentalization of the traditional and emotionally charged notion of the native place and the native-place organization by various Chinese officials as well as by migrant elites for their respective goals: mobilization and control by the state, "**flexible accumulation**" and legitimization of power by the migrant elites.

Scholars as producers

In the West

The topic of overseas Chinese and of Chinese migration is currently in vogue not only in the media but also in the academia, both in- and outside China. Business-school authors have contributed with numerous volumes to the literature about the overseas Chinese (or global Chinese) business networks that have attracted great interest following the economic successes of the "Asian tigers" and China itself. Some telling titles: "*Inside the Overseas Chinese Network*" (Sender 1991), *The Bamboo Network* (Weidenbaum 1996), *The Spirit of Chinese Capitalism* (Redding 1990), *Confucianism*

and *Economic Development: An Oriental Alternative?* (Tai 1989). The “Asian crisis” of 1997 cast some doubts on the cultural explanations of “Asian” economic growth, but doesn’t seem to have ended the tide of research undertakings on the subject, as the continuing spate of conferences and articles demonstrates.

Nyíri on the story behind “Asian values”: cultural determinism

Many Western academics and business schools have produced cultural explanations to explain the “economic miracles,” first of the “tiger economies” and then of the PRC at a time of stagnation in the West. These had a spiritual ancestor in the *nihonjinron*, theories of Japanese distinctiveness that had existed since the eighteenth century but enjoyed a boom in the 1970s and 80s as a means of explaining the nature of Japan’s economic success (Yoshino 1992). For economists, of course, there was a set of measurable parameters that constituted the “Asian model,” e.g. high savings rates, low overhead costs, low social spendings, etc. But others immediately became preoccupied with the values that supposedly stood behind these parameters: e.g. thrift behind high savings rates, a family-oriented society behind low social spending. So they came up with “Asian values” such as—to present a typical set—sacrificing the present for the future, education, teamwork, planning for the long term, stability of society, acceptance of inequality, and virtuous behavior (Hofstede & Bond 1988). This kind of values was very similar to those Weber pointed to arguing that Asian ethics were incompatible with capitalist development, except these people were arguing the opposite.

According to these authors, “Chinese capitalism” is “guanxi capitalism” where **guanxi**, or “business networks” are a management principle to be studied and shared ethnicity is an essential feature. The shared business culture of **guanxi** underlies the powerful “bamboo network” of “Greater China,” i.e. China, Taiwan, Hong Kong plus the overseas Chinese of Southeast Asia, for which it is fashionable to produce awesome GDP and capitalization figures, however methodologically impossible this appears. The overseas Chinese businessmen are “selective” and “cliquish” but “fabulously wealthy,” and Americans are advised to foster **guanxi** with them so as to get help in entering the market of China itself. Weidenbaum and Hughes (1996), for example, write that “businesses that make up the bamboo network are unified by a common language, background, a Confucian tradition, and a culture that places its trust in hard work and family strength” (see also Sender 1991).

Both Westerners and, at that time to a lesser extent, ethnic Chinese academics in the US and Hong Kong pioneered this corpus of literature. The first authors were usually political scientists or sociologists, but they wrote books intended for businessmen and certainly not measuring up to any scholarly standard. This was one of the earliest examples of the now-common trend of area-studies academics acting as business and political consultants. This is important, because it is easy to see their intent to market themselves as intercultural experts, and because these people served as bridges between Asian political discourse and Western business discourse (e.g. Redding 1990, Rozman 1991, Tai 1989, King 1991).

Although applied in social sciences in America since the Second World War, cultural **relativism** became mainstream only after the idea that there is an “Asian economic model” became accepted, around the mid-nineties, and demand for “area specialists” rose. Unlike former sovietologists who had mostly been political scientists, many Asia specialists had traditionally been anthropologists, thus belonging to a discipline associated with antiestablishment, alternative politics, and they were often supportive of political

systems such as China's. In addition, they had been largely sidelined compared to Eastern Europe hands. They were now glad to advance their ideas—quite apart from opportunistic self-marketing motives. Rhoads Murphey, also past president of AAS, wrote (Murphey, 2001) that "we must first accept that East Asians' values and goals differ from ours." And then, cultural relativists would continue, refrain from judging their societies using our values. This created a theoretical basis for accepting the "values" enshrined in the "guanxi capitalism" discourse as "Asian values."

The empirical justification for selecting these values was then furnished by experimental psychological studies (mostly already done) such as those by Bond, Hofstede, Kuo-shu Yang, etc. It should be noted, however, that not all studies of Chinese social psychology had come up with these values. For example, a study by Wilson (1974) and Bloom (1977) conclude that Chinese children, far from being "ethnocentric" or "heterocentric," are more "autocentric" than American children, and that this, too, can be tied to Confucianism, but to its aspect stressing personal integrity and righteousness as justification for opposing tyrannical authority. Proponents of Asian values simply selected the studies that suited them.

Ethnic Chinese scholars promoted the "guanxi capitalism" approach not only for Western but also for Chinese audiences, in Hong Kong and Taiwan. But in Taiwan, interest in this theory declined with the decline of government interest in promoting authoritarianism.

In the meantime, the discourse was picked up by Asian leaders who, after the end of the Cold War and **Tiananmen**, were keen to find justification for authoritarianism. Also, while these countries had benefited from the globalization of their economies (and used the same developmental yardstick to measure the advancement of their countries as the West), they felt threatened by the push for labor and environmental standards that would have raised the cost of their exports. In fact, the invention of positive "Asian values" was possible only because of economic success and the cultural explanations provided by Western academics. As Ong writes:

American business academics ... mediate between business-speak, or what Bruce Cumings calls "Rimspeak" (Cumings 1993) and the self-Orientalizing discourses of ethnic Chinese spokesmen in Southeast Asia. Lee Kuan Yew cites Joel Kotkin's book *Tribes* (Kotkin 1992) to claim that "networking between people of the same race has always existed," thus gaining a scientific gloss from an essentialist construction of culture (Ong and Nonini 1997).

The Asian values discourse in all cases meant emphasis on traditional values and ethnic cohesion, the denial of universalistic values, the condemnation of the Western "social evils," and calling for authoritative, paternalistic rule by virtuous, clean leaders and loyal public servants working in the best interest of the people, as opposed to the spontaneous preference of the people who do not have the qualifications to know what's best for society. This was contrasted with Western individualism, which has done its positive job but now has led to economic stagnations, cultural decline, and social disintegration.

In the PRC, the discourse on Chinese cultural values first showed up in the mid to late 1980s publications for overseas Chinese as a way of rekindling their affiliation with the PRC after a period of estrangement. It has been getting stronger in the domestic rhetoric of the government continuously since **Tiananmen** as a means of promoting "patriotism." It involves "patriotic education" support for the promotion of traditional arts, Confucianism, and religions deemed traditionally Chinese as long as it is done by state-controlled, "patri-

otic" organizations, and "scientific research" to prove that "Western democracy" is not suitable for Chinese conditions. They organized such events as the commemorative activities for the legendary Emperor Yan, which drew large donations from overseas Chinese.

Most Western governments have been influenced by the "Asian values" discourse to some extent, at least borrowing some **cultural relativism** arguments to explain why they chose "constructive engagement," shifted from multilateral to bilateral (if any) human rights talks with China, Indonesia, Burma etc., delinked human and labor rights questions from trade, or stopped sponsoring UN resolutions condemning rights abuses.

More particularly, Chinese migration has attracted attention lately due to the worldwide scare surrounding "illegal immigrants" since the grounding of the Golden Venture with 286 would-be immigrants from the PRC on board in New York harbor in 1993. Not least due to this interest from policymakers, several volumes have been published about Chinese in Europe since 1998. Whereas the subject had attracted little attention until then, suddenly, a number of scholars of modern China are engaging in or planning research on European Chinese.

Finally, the rise of Chinese nationalism and the appearance of China as a rising power have also attracted interest to the Chinese diaspora. Academic centers of study or libraries specifically devoted to overseas Chinese have appeared in the last few years in Hong Kong and Australia, and an International Society for the Study of Chinese Overseas (ISSCO) has been formed as well as an Overseas Chinese Documentation and Research Center.

The relationship between these academic initiatives and migrant politics is a complex one. Wealthy overseas Chinese businessmen are among the main donors contributing to them, just like ethnic (Asian-American, African-American, Jewish etc.) studies programs in the US have benefited from grants from ethnic businesses. The desire to consume images and texts empowering and glorifying the overseas Chinese experience has expanded from the news media to more highbrow cultural products. One of the first examples of that is *The Encyclopedia of Chinese Overseas*, edited by the renowned writer Lynn Pan. Although the entries in this book were written by scholars, it was marketed to a very broad audience, especially across Southeast Asia, figuring at the center of bookshop displays in Singapore and Hong Kong.

In China

In China, the academic study of overseas Chinese is also enjoying an unprecedented boom due to the possibility of attracting overseas Chinese funding as well as to the political support for ties with overseas Chinese and ideas of global cultural Chinese-ness. This ideological constraint, plus the numerous sensitivities attached to Southeast Asian suspicions of the disloyalty of local Chinese and Western concerns over illegal migrations, make the field one of the most highly politically controlled in the social studies scene. But overseas Chinese studies centers and publications have proliferated in the last years, with several now existing in Peking, Liaoning, Shanghai, Fujian, Canton, and Guangxi. As long as they do not contradict the officially sanctioned imaginary, domestic, and foreign Overseas Chinese studies are generally seen as a politically friendly discipline by China.

Along with governments, media, and migrant elites, academics also tell Chinese overseas in what way they are or should be Chinese. This is not new: Tu Wei-ming finds that scholars of China have impacted the Chinese view of themselves so greatly that he calls them the "fourth symbolic Chinese universe" (Tu 1994). But the relationship between the researcher and the researched has been redefined in the case of overseas Chinese, as in many other cases. This is due to the greater mobility of the migrants and the researchers; the wider maneuvering room of the ethnic economy; the blurring of the (class) divide between highly skilled, entrepreneurial and labor migrants; the lowering of the social status of scholars in China; and the loosening of the canonical rules of fieldwork.

In the parts of the world newly "colonized" by entrepreneurial migrants from mainland China, "China scholars" are part of their transnational network rather than dwellers of an ivory tower. In poor Eastern Europe, China scholars as well as students who may be translating classical texts at the same time make extra money by interpreting, translating and helping in dealings with the authorities, or even take these up as their main occupation. At the same time, the Chinese-language media frequently reports on their presence as "China scholars" at various functions of Chinese organizations, and occasionally cites them in support of some statement, thereby adding to the legitimacy of the dominant discourse of Chineseness. (At other times, of course, their statements are contested or ignored if they do not correspond to the preferred self-image.)

Nor do Chinese scholars any longer enjoy a position of social superiority over other migrants. Visiting scholars or students very often seek to benefit from the ethnic economy, whether in identifying business opportunities in Eastern Europe or by finding manual work in Western Europe, and do so, unlike local business leaders, often starting with no capital. Furthermore, their stories are circulated in the new migrant media with titles such as "Returning to Germany: Interviews with students and scholars living in Germany" or "The odd-jobbing life of a physics PhD." As a result, when scholars from China visit Chinese abroad for short-term research trips, they are often hosted at the expense of their interviewees. Most of the articles on overseas Chinese, especially on new migrants, in journals like *Bagui Qiaoshi* (Overseas Chinese History of Bagui) and *Huaqiao Huaren Lishi Yanjiu* (Overseas Chinese History Studies), are highly empirical, emphasizing the economic situation of the subjects of their research—usually in terms of successes, or investments or donations in China.

While the triumphalist-patriotic tropes known from the media are less common here, most of the authors base their observations on statements by organization and business leaders as well as the local Chinese-language press, and refrain from a critical analysis of the context of these statements. For example, Chen Yande, from the History Department of Xiamen University, wrote about the Fujian native-place organization in the Netherlands that it has "played a role in the field of contributing to homeland construction" and that it has "displayed an extraordinary concern for the homeland" (Chen 2001). Without citing the source, Chen bases this on newspaper articles and interviews with the leaders themselves including information about donations by organization leaders to school construction in their native villages. Nowhere does he raise the question what motives they may have had in making the donations. (There are, however, also notable exceptions to such borrowing.) The articles are then often sent to those

leaders as well as circulating in the official Chinese establishment, creating another loop in the recirculation of the dominant narratives of patriotism and modernity.

In some cases, research about overseas Chinese is initiated by the Chinese organizations themselves. In 1998, a leader of the Hungarian Chinese Women's Federation hired a researcher from the Institute of Sociology at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences to produce a "Report on Chinese Women in Europe." Not surprisingly, reports such as this phrase Chinese migration to Europe in terms of "contribution" and "development," keywords of the official discourse. At the same time, they reflect new migrants' desire to be seen as modern, authentic, and different from the "old" overseas Chinese.

"The young and middle-aged women from large Chinese cities who have relatively high education levels and have come to Europe in the 1990s are representative of the new generation of Chinese women in Europe. They have a clear advantage in knowledge, are resourceful and pioneers by nature. Unlike the old generation, they are not content with gradual accumulation over a long time; instead, they hope to use their advantages to achieve rapid development. ... What made them come to Europe is not the need for a living but the drive to broaden their horizons, to seek even further development" (Yang and Wang 1998: 10).

Conclusion

I attempted to show how new migrant elites, scholars, and the media engage in a mutually reinforcing homogenization and hegemonization of the officially supported (or created?) imaginary of the "new migrant." To be sure, this discourse is not unchallenged. First, the "old migrants"—whether in Britain or the Philippines—often attack the new ones no less vociferously, both echoing local anti-immigration views and on the counts of not being authentically Chinese enough. They accuse new immigrants of being largely illegal, spoiling the reputation of overseas Chinese and of China itself by being criminal and unethical in their business dealings. Nonetheless, it is worth noting that these objections, too, are phrased in part within the same discourse of patriotism. The second challenge to the discourse of the "new migrant" comes from the fact that the organizational elites who engage in its perpetuation carry little credibility.

Discussion: Schein and Nyíri on studying transnational media representations

Schein: There are at least four approaches to the media as a mirror of transnational processes and transnational production of nationalism. One has to do with the way that news media affects and reflects international politics because it is a form of representation of nation-states and of political interests. The second type of approach is what Pál was doing in his quotes from the texts and looking at the video. Here we look at the actual content as representation of migrant identities or experiences. The same thing could be done for national identities within China or beyond China. The third approach, which is more relevant to social scientists who do fieldwork—and this is also something

that Pál does—includes the ethnography of the production and consumption of these texts. That is, you talk to the producer, the newspaper editor; you talk to the people who read or watch, or you watch with them. And you also talk about distribution: who reads these papers, how they get circulated. This third method may only be relevant to those who do ethnographic fieldwork. And there is a fourth approach: reflecting on our own work as texts that also contribute to the production of identities.

State representations of identity do not necessarily coincide with what an informant says in an interview. Talking to people and observing daily lives reveal the cultural environments and subjectivities of these individuals.

Question: How is an anthropological interpretation of a text different from a literary-critical interpretation?

Schein: It is not really a methodological difference. Anthropologists didn't create something new here. Rather, it is the fact that you interpret the text in a social context, in the context of observations. Instead of treating the text as an entity in itself, you treat it as a tool to observe the production of culture. You treat producing, distributing, and consuming texts as a social activity. You bring the text in contact with the people, as it were. You can watch a video or a television program, or read an article, and discuss it then with your informants, or talk to its makers.

Nyiri: You break down the boundary between the text and the field. You make connections between the text, the speaker, and the observed social situation.

It must be emphasized that public and private narratives can be very different. Large collectivities like Chineseness do not often register in individual narratives. In private, my informants, including organization leaders, rarely talk about being responsible for China or giving something back to it. The ways in which migrants understand their objectives and the kind of agency they exhibit can be much more complex and plural. This does not mean that migrants do not have a sense of loyalty or responsibility toward the homeland; but how they narrate what they are doing is mostly about their children, making money, or buying a house.

Actual social practices are yet another level of analysis, one that is accessible through ethnographic fieldwork. For example, Chinese in Hungary may often invoke their ethnic identity when forging business networks. At the same time, it is very common for them to eschew living in buildings with many other Chinese residents. In this way, they can escape social control and perceived dangers of being robbed or kidnapped by coethnics.

Chapter 7

Race in China

FRANK DIKÖTTER*

The construction of the Han

Dikötter on his approach to the study of China

I do not generally like to describe myself specifically as a historian of China, as I identify more with the general field of historical practice rather than with any particular geographical location. When we study such global trends as “nationalism” or “state formation,” it does not make much sense to confine oneself to “Chinese history” or “French history,” as if these subfields somehow stood on their own. It might be more useful, and challenging, to link particular local contexts with global history. In many cases, for instance the history of eugenics or race, it makes more sense to approach history globally and see how particular ideas or practices are domesticated into a local context. “Global history” does not mean that one has to study the entire world—but it does entail a certain sensibility towards the global context within which social groups have inevitably operated over the past few centuries. “Global” cannot be reduced either to a study of “China and the West”: all too often, historians of China tend to view the world in terms of China and its alter ego, namely Europe and Japan: Africa is hardly mentioned, while the tools of research historians of Africa have forged (oral history being a prime example) are rarely taken on board.

The importance of history

If the study of history teaches students anything at all, it would probably be critical thinking, in particular a critical reflection on the present. The object of study of historians is time, in particular changes over time. Who can operate within a framework that ignores time? Whether one is an anthropologist, whether one works on economic theory or studies the politics of China today—one needs to include an understanding of the “before,” however the “before” is defined. Our understanding of what happened in the “past,” however, is all too often based on clichés which often do more to legitimize the “present” than to question it: many popular notions about the past crumble as soon as one subjects them to closer historical analysis.

* The main part of this chapter is based on Dikötter 2002a, reproduced with permission from the publisher.

The purpose to this chapter is to query a number of notions that appear to be deceptively stable and unproblematic.

For example, as the anthropologist Benedict Anderson asserts, nations never precede nationalism. Nationalism creates nations. Ideology appears first, and not the other way around. Only after a long process of social habituation do people in particular parts of the world start feeling that they are "Dutch" or "Chinese." This is a process that Duara describes in his chapter, *The Legacy of Empires and Nations in East Asia*.

Denaturalizing race

I would like to denaturalize another notion, namely that of "race." As a historian, I do not see "race" as a straightforward and unproblematic term used to describe "real" biological differences between groups of people, but as a new—and spurious—social construct which became globally dominant roughly from the 1870s to the Second World War. Racial theories invoked the legitimacy of science to construct boundaries between social groups which were portrayed as rooted in "nature": "race" naturalized social and political divisions, as if political inequalities between Europe and the colonies were not contingent and open to contestation, but based on more permanent evolutionary laws. Many social elites around the globe started classifying humanity into distinct groups on the basis of their skin color, hair, body height, and other morphological features considered to be "typical," thus justifying differential treatment in the name of "science."

The modernist desire to classify, count, and rank may well date roughly from the eighteenth century, but the definitions of "race" that developed during this particular period have retained their currency to the present day. Until recently, for example, it was common in the social sciences to study "race" not as a social construct to be questioned, but as a useful classifier in an approach widely known as "race relations": one did not undermine the legitimacy of the notion of "race" by studying how it came into existence, but rather how different "races" related to each other. Historians and sociologists would study South Africa, for example, by asking how white people related to black people and how apartheid characterized the relationships between these two groups. They did not question the very unit of analysis, namely "race," and the ways in which various groups from Europe came to see themselves as "whites" and lumped very different linguistic, social, and cultural groups in Africa together under the label of "blacks." In short, they continued to see the world in "black" and "white," rather than as a mosaic of very different social groups polarized into opposites for reasons related to power.

Very much linked to the "race relations" approach was a certain vocabulary, much of which is still prevalent today. "Prejudice" is one such term, meaning quite literally that a judgment is made before any analytical or cognitive faculties have been used. "Prejudice" is seen as a raw instinct, an emotional dislike of another "race." This term is of course very problematic, because in the last few decades a whole body of scholarship has shown that racism is not so much the result of a "prejudgment" but precisely the outcome of a long process of habituation and education. Racism is part of a social cosmology that has been painstakingly constructed and inculcated by particular social groups via culture. "Race," in short, is not a biological reality; it is a social construct.

By that I do not mean to say that there are no real phenotypical distinctions between—say, just to stick to South Africa—somebody who is Zulu, or the son of a Zulu, and somebody who is the son of a Boer, a Dutch peasant, who was born in South Africa. The problem is that the "phenotypical" differences between these two groups are smaller than the "phenotypical" differences one can find within each group: the boundaries, in short, are spurious, given the huge amount of variation which occurs between individuals of

the human species. A whole body of scholarship from the 1930s onwards questions the justification for making these strict boundaries between human groups. The human species is marked by enormous variety. It is very difficult to say where a "racial" boundary would start, or what one should take as a measure of "race"—skin "color," hair color, eye shape, body height, etc.

Another important observation is that population geneticists have long found that the surface features racial theorists refer to (the visible traits) represent only a very small portion of the genotype. To put it briefly, appearances cannot be trusted.

What could be done instead of the "race relations" approach, in the case of South Africa, is to ask how and why a group of immigrants from Europe started to define themselves as "white," and how and why they started amalgamating a huge variety of very different people into one homogeneous group referred to as "blacks," rather than Zulu or Bantu. The question is how something that we as historians would call "social" becomes defined as biological: in short, how are social groups biologized, or "racialized." "Racialization" is a convenient term because it so clearly emphasizes the fact that "races" are not out there to be discovered, but are socially constructed as such within a given historical context for particular political reasons.

What I find particularly interesting is that European theories of race—and many very different ones were proposed during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries—were taken on board in other parts of the world. I would like to look at China in particular as an example of the local inculturation of a global trend.

The legitimate question is sometimes raised that if one defines "race" as a social construct, the importance and resilience of racism is somehow played down. My answer is that the fact that "race" is a social construct does not make it any less real socially and politically: "races" may not be biologically real, but they are socially all too real, in particular for the many individuals who are socially discriminated, politically excluded, or economically marginalized as a result of racialized practices. Racial discrimination in Europe and in other places around the globe can be experienced on a daily basis. Any person socially perceived to be other than "white" is very likely to be treated unequally in London today, whether by a bus driver, a police officer, or a formal employer: entire institutions discriminate on a systematic basis. "Race" may well be a folk notion rather than a viable "scientific" concept, but its social reality is all too pervasive and tangible for the many it excludes.

While over fifty different "minority nationalities" (*shaoshu minzu*) are officially recognized to exist in the People's Republic of China (PRC), well over 90% of the population are classified as Han, a term translated in English as "ethnic Chinese" or "Chinese of native stock." Despite the existence in China of cultural, linguistic, and regional differences which are as great as those to be found in Europe, the Han are claimed by mainland officials to be a homogeneous ethnic group (*minzu*) with common origins, a shared history, and an ancestral territory. "Han" and "Chinese" have become virtually identical not only within official rhetoric and scholarly discourse in the PRC, but also in the eyes of many foreign scholars. Eric Hobsbawm, in an influential book that highlights the extent to which nations are social constructs rather than universal givens, perpetuates the notion of a Han majority by noting that China is among "the extremely rare examples of historic states composed of a population that is ethnically almost or entirely homogeneous" (Hobsbawm 1990: 66).

Only recently have some researchers started to refute the notion of an ethnic majority and attempted to describe China as a mosaic composed of many culturally diverse groups within the so-called “Han” (Moser 1985, Gladney 1991). While references did exist in traditional China to the descendants of the various Han dynasties (206 BC–AD 220), the representation of the “Han” as an ethnically integrated majority is a modern phenomenon intrinsically linked to the rise of nationalism at the end of the nineteenth century. The idea of a Han majority can be considered to be a modern invention used by nationalist élites to forge a sense of common identity among the various population groups of China in contradistinction to foreign powers who threatened the country and to the Manchus who ruled the Qing empire until its fall in 1911.

As in many other countries, moreover, racial theories have been essential in the construction of group identity in China throughout much of the twentieth century. As **Sun Yat-sen** (1866–1925)—founder of the Kuomintang, China’s Nationalist Party, and widely accepted as the “father” of the nation in China and in Taiwan to this day—put it in his famous *Three Principles of the People*, “The greatest force is common blood. The Chinese belong to the yellow race because they come from the blood stock of the yellow race. The blood of ancestors is transmitted by heredity down through the race, making blood kinship a powerful force” (Sun 1927: 4–5). Sun Yat-sen and other political leaders considered the Han to constitute the absolute majority in China, a distinct people with shared physical attributes and a line of blood which could be traced back to the most ancient period. If socially constructed “races” are population groups which are imagined to have boundaries based on real or imagined biological characteristics, and if they can be contrasted to socially constructed “ethnicities,” which are population groups thought to be based on culturally acquired characteristics, then both were seen to be coterminous by political élites in modern China: ideas of “culture,” “ethnicity” and “race,” in other words, were often conflated by political and intellectual élites in order to represent cultural features as secondary to and derivative of an imagined racial specificity.

Politics have been an essential factor in the emergence of racial discourse in modern China: in order to legitimize control over the territory which was part of the imperial realm until 1911, the political leaders of the Republic until 1949 and the People’s Republic after 1949 have reinvented subject peoples in border areas as mere subbranches of the Han. This assimilationist vision emphasizes both the organic entity of all the peoples living within the political boundaries of China and the inevitable fusion of non-Han groups into a broader Chinese nation dominated by the Han: the political boundaries of the state, in short, could be claimed to be based on a more profound biological unity between the various peoples of China. **Chiang Kai-shek**, the effective head of the Nationalist Republic from 1927 to 1949 and the leader of the Kuomintang, clearly expressed this vision of the nation as a culturally diverse but racially unified entity in his important work entitled *China’s Destiny*, written during the fight against Japan in the Second World War:

Our various clans actually belong to the same nation, as well as to the same racial stock. Therefore, there is an inner factor closely linking the historical destiny of common existence and common sorrow and joy of the whole Chinese nation. That there are five people designated in China is not due to differences in race or blood,

but to religion and geographical environment. In short, the differentiation among China's five peoples is due to regional and religious factors, and not to race or blood. This fact must be thoroughly understood by all our fellow countrymen (Chiang 1947: 39–40).

The new episteme of Western science

While this assimilationist vision is closely linked to the politics of national unity, its legitimacy has primarily been based on science. Racial theories were only made possible by the advent of scientific knowledge in Europe from the late eighteenth century onwards, as science offered a whole new episteme from which relationship between culture and biology could for the first time be systematically imagined. Racial theories, first in parts of Europe and gradually in other points of the globe, sought to explain cultural differences as natural differences and to represent social groups as biological units: racial theorists appropriated science, from craniology to genetics, in order to present the group boundaries they had constructed as objectively grounded in natural laws. In Europe, China, and many other parts of the globe, negative attitudes about the physical appearance of individuals or population groups can be found before modernity, but these attitudes rarely formed a coherent system that could provide legitimacy to social inclusions or exclusions.

The politics of nationalism and the episteme of science were both intrinsic to modernity and only appeared in China with the reform movement, which gained momentum after China's defeat against Japan in 1894–95. Imperial reformers after 1895 proposed to strengthen the country in its confrontation with foreign powers by reforming the thought and behavior of all the people. The first to systematically articulate a distinctly nationalist agenda of reform in which all citizens would participate in the revival of the country, they promoted an alternative body of knowledge which derived its legitimacy independently of the official examination system, based on the Confucian classics. The new knowledge deployed by the reformers—a complex fusion of different indigenous strains of learning with foreign discursive repertoires—was marked by an appeal to 'science' as a legitimizing force. It was also influenced by historical developments specific to the **Qing dynasty**.

The reconfiguration of lineage discourse and the emergence of racial taxonomies

The fallacy of "culturalism" versus racism

As noted above, racial theories were dependent on the new episteme of science, which appeared only from the late eighteenth century onwards in parts of Europe before emerging elsewhere across the globe. Attitudes towards out-groups in imperial China have often been described as "culturalist": lack of adherence to the cultural norms and ritual practices of Confucianism were the principal markers distinguishing outsiders, often referred to as "barbarians," from insiders. In an assimilationist vision, however, barbarians could be culturally absorbed—*laihua*, "come and be transformed," or *hanhua*, "become Chinese."

The Chunqiu, a chronological history of the **Spring and Autumn period** (722–481 BC) traditionally attributed to Confucius, hinged on the idea of cultural assimilation. In his commentary on the Gongyang, He Xiu (129–182 AD) later distinguished between the zhuxia, the “various people of Xia [the first Chinese empire],” and the Yi and Di barbarians, living outside the scope of the Chinese cultural sphere. In the Age of Great Peace, an allegorical concept similar to the Golden Age in the West, the barbarians would flow in and be transformed: the world would be one. Some researchers have questioned the “culturalist” thesis by drawing attention to passages from the Classics of Confucianism which are apparently incompatible with the concept of cultural universalism. Most quoted is the Zuo zhuan (fourth century BC), a feudal chronicle: “If he is not of our race, he is sure to have a different mind” (*fei wo zulei, qi xin bi yi*). This sentence seems to support the allegation that at least some degree of “racial discrimination” existed during the early stages of Chinese civilization.

Both interpretations, however, have in common the adoption of a modern conceptual framework that distinguishes sharply between “culture” and “race,” a distinction that was not clearly expressed before the advent of modernity. In China and in many other parts of the globe, physical markers and cultural characteristics were rarely separated, nor were perceived bodily differences rationalized into a coherent system that might confer legitimacy to exclusionary practices. A revealing illustration of the lack of distinction between “race” and “culture” appears in a twelfth-century description of African slaves, bought from Arab merchants by rich merchants in Canton:

Their color is black as ink, their lips are red and their teeth white, their hair is curly and yellow. There are males and females ... They live in the mountains (or islands) beyond the seas. They eat raw things. If, in captivity, they are fed on cooked food, after several days they get diarrhoea. This is called “changing the bowels” [*huanchang*]. For this reason they sometimes fall ill and die; if they do not die one can keep them, and after having been kept a long time they begin to understand human speech [i.e. Chinese], although they themselves cannot speak it (Duyvendak 1949: 24).

In popular Daoism, a human had to change bones (*huangu*) in order to become immortal: by analogy, African slaves were expected to change bowels (*huanchang*) to become half-human. A physical transformation, in other words, was perceived to be an intrinsic part of cultural assimilation. Even in the nineteenth century, scholar-officials like Xu Jiyu who had extended contact with European traders and were familiar with world geography wrote how “the hair and eyes of some [Europeans] gradually turn black when they come to China and stay for a long time. The features of such men and women half-resemble the Chinese.” If it could be shown that negative representations of physical markers existed in traditional China (Dikötter 1992), no concept of “race” or any systematic attempt to classify population groups on the basis of such markers existed until the emergence of modernity in the 1890s.

While long-standing attitudes towards physical characteristics may have facilitated the appearance of racial identities in China after 1895, several historical factors were more directly relevant, namely (1) the social institution and cultural discourse of the lineage, (2) the search for wealth, power, and unity by the reformers after the defeat of China in the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–5 and (3) the anti-Manchu nationalism of the

revolutionaries in the first decade of this century. Lineage discourse under the Qing—a dynasty founded in 1644 by the Manchus after their invasion of China—was perhaps one of the most prominent building blocks in the construction of symbolic boundaries between racially defined groups of people.

The lineage

The Qing era was marked by a consolidation of the cult of patrilineal descent, center of a broad movement of social reform that had emphasized the family and the lineage (*zu*) since the collapse of the Ming. Considerable friction arose between lineages throughout the nineteenth century in response to heightened competition over natural resources, the need to control market towns, the gradual erosion of social order and organization disorders caused by demographic pressures. Lineage feuds as well as interethnic conflicts (*fenlei xiedou*) prevailed throughout the empire, but were more common in the southeast, where lineages had grown more powerful than in the north (Lamley 1977). The militarization of powerful lineages reinforced folk models of kinship solidarity, forcing in turn more loosely organized associations to form a unified descent group under the leadership of the gentry. At court level too, ideologies of descent became increasingly important, in particular with the erosion of a sense of cultural identity among Manchu aristocrats. Pamela Crossley has shown how ethnic identity through patrilineal descent became important in the Qianlong period (1736–95), when the court progressively turned towards a rigid taxonomy of distinct descent lines (*zu*) to distinguish between Han, Manchu, Mongol, or Tibetan (Crossley 1990). Within three distinct social levels—popular culture, gentry society, and court politics—the common notion of patrilineal descent came to be deployed on a widespread scale in the creation and maintenance of group boundaries.

The reform movement

Spence on the Chinese Empire in the late 19th century

in *The Search for Modern China*. New York and London: W. W. Norton & Co., 1990; pp. 139–141.

China's Confucian-trained scholars were aware of the moral and economic pressures on their society in the early nineteenth century. Drawing on the intellectual tradition in which they had been raised, they proposed administrative and educational reforms, warned about the rapidly rising population, and urged greater fairness in the distribution of wealth. Some also pointed to the social inequities separating men and women, and pleaded for greater sensitivity toward the status of women in daily life.

The spread of opium addiction posed a particularly complex social dilemma. Scholars, officials, and the emperor himself were torn over whether to legalize the drug or ban it absolutely. At the same time, massive British investments in the drug's manufacture and distribution, and the critical part that opium revenues played in Britain's international balance-of-payments strategy, made the opium trade a central facet of that nation's for-

eign policy. The Qing, believing the problem to be a domestic one, decided to ban the drug. The British responded with force of arms. Defeating the Qing, they imposed a treaty in 1842 that fundamentally altered the structure of Qing relations with foreign powers, and ended the long cycle of history in which China's rulers had imposed effective controls over all foreigners resident on their soil.

This new foreign presence in China coincided with—and doubtless contributed to—new waves of domestic turbulence. Uprisings against the Qing had been growing in frequency during the later eighteenth century. The widening social dislocations of the nineteenth century brought even greater unrest, until in mid-century four major rebellions erupted, at least two of which—the Taiping and Nian—had the potential to overthrow the dynasty. The Taiping was based on fundamentalist Christian and egalitarian principles that cut at the heart of Confucian and imperial values; the Nian introduced new patterns of mobile guerilla warfare that threatened the prestige of the state's basic military institutions. The other two rebellions, both led by Muslims, broke out in China's far southwest and northwest, and challenged the hold of the Qing over the non-Chinese peoples in its more inaccessible regions. Only an extraordinary series of military campaigns led by Confucian-trained scholars who put their loyalty to traditional Chinese values above all else, and were determined to perpetuate the prevailing social, educational, and family systems, enabled the Qing dynasty to survive.

The irony was that, in winning their great victories, Confucian statesmen were drawn to emulate and adopt certain elements of foreign military technology and international law that were ultimately to undermine the sanctity of the very values they endeavored to preserve. But initially such consequences could not be foreseen, and in the name of self-strengthening the Qing not only established new arsenals for arms manufacture and shipbuilding, they also set up schools to teach foreign languages, hired foreigners to collect customs dues on an equitable basis, tried to hire a small fleet of Western ships and seamen, and established the equivalent of a Foreign Ministry, the first such institution in China.

Relations between Chinese and foreigners remained strained, however. Anti-missionary outbreaks in China were matched by anti-Chinese outrages in the United States, and the flow of Chinese immigrants was ultimately slashed back by a series of unilateral American restrictions. In both cases, misunderstandings of the other's culture and goals abounded, even though personal efforts made clear the possibilities for tenderness, compassion, and imaginative adaptation between the races.

By the late nineteenth century, despite the foreign pressures and domestic turbulence, it looked as if the Qing might construct a viable new synthesis. But the many achievements in the application of foreign technology to China's military and industrial needs were shattered by two defeats that the Chinese suffered in brief yet bitter wars—one with the French and one with the Japanese—that left much of China's vaunted "modern" navy at the bottom of the sea. When a burst of reforming zeal in 1898 was stillborn because of conservative opposition, the stage was set for the **Boxer Uprising** of 1900, in which a profound anti-Westernism led to widespread attacks on foreign missionaries and their converts. The Boxers were suppressed by foreign force, but in their wake came the first signs of a growing anti-Manchu Chinese nationalism, expressed in newspaper articles and pamphlets, in economic boycotts, and in a flurry of insurrectionary activity aimed at undercutting the power of the Qing state from within.

The final attempt of the Qing to rally their dynastic forces was a potentially effective mix of political, military, and economic reform: there were experiments in constitutional government on Western models, efforts at rearming and reorganizing the army along

Western lines, and a move to gain a stronger hold over China's economy by developing a centralized railway network. Yet, the combination, instead of bringing stability, brought confrontations and new layers of misunderstanding. The constitutional assemblies established in each province provided a focus for criticism of the Qing and for the emergence of local interests. The vision of a tough, modernized army under skilled Manchu direction could not but be threatening to Chinese nationalists dreaming of their own future independence from the Qing. And the government's attempts to centralize railways and use foreign loans to do so angered provincial investors and patriots alike. When these flames of dissent were skillfully fanned by radical leaders and their impatient followers, the Qing found its foundations seriously undermined.

Helpless in the face of a military mutiny that erupted in late 1911, the Manchus saw no choice by early 1912 but to abdicate their power and declare the Qing dynasty at an end. There remained a crucial vacuum at the center of the Chinese state and no specially talented leaders were able to fill it, only various groupings with rival ideologies and claims. The legacy of dynastic collapse was not a confident new republic, but a period of civil war and intellectual disorder that, tragically for the Chinese people, was even harsher than the period that had followed the fall of the Ming 268 years before. Yet amid the confusion, the dreams for a strong China held out by statecraft thinkers, self-strengtheners, constitutional reformers, and revolutionaries were never wholly eclipsed. The constructive aspect of the last century of Qing rule was that the idea of China's greatness was not allowed to die.

The 1898 reformers, who championed a radical transformation of imperial institutions and orthodox ideology, understood the notion of "race" on the basis of the lineage. Leading reformers like **Liang Qichao** (1873–1929) and Kang Youwei (1858–1927) selectively appropriated scientific knowledge from foreign discursive repertoires to invent a new sense of group identity. In search of wealth and power in the wake of the country's disastrous defeat against Japan, in need of a unifying concept capable of binding all the emperor's subjects together in a powerful nation which could resist the foreign encroachments which had started with the first **Opium War** (1839–1842), the reformers used new evolutionary theories to present the world as a battlefield in which different races struggled for survival. They also appealed to patrilineal culture in order to represent all inhabitants of China as the descendants of the Yellow Emperor. Extrapolating from an indigenous vision of lineage feuds, which permeated the social landscape of late imperial China, the reformers constructed a racialized worldview in which "yellows" competed with "whites" over degenerate breeds of "browns," "blacks" and "reds."

Thriving on its affinity with lineage discourse, the notion of "race" gradually emerged as the most common symbol of national cohesion, permanently replacing more conventional emblems of cultural identity. The threat of racial extinction (*miezhong*), a powerful message of fear based on more popular anxieties about lineage extinction (*miezu*), was often raised to bolster the reformers' message of change in the face of imperialist aggressions: "They will enslave us and hinder the development of our spirit and body ... The brown and black races constantly waver between life and death, why not the 400 million of yellows?" (Yan 1959: 22). In the reformers' symbolic network of racialized others, the dominating "white" and "yellow races" were opposed to

the “darker races,” doomed to racial extinction by hereditary inadequacy. The social hierarchy which existed between different groups of people in the empire was expanded into a vision of racial hierarchy characterized by “noble” (*guizhong*) and “low” (*jianzhong*), “superior” (*youzhong*) and “inferior” (*liezhong*), “historical” and “ahistorical races” (*youlishi de zhongzu*). The distinction between “common people” (*liangmin*) and “mean people” (*jianmin*), widespread in China until the early eighteenth century, found an echo in Tang Caichang (1867–1900), who opposed “fine races” (*liangzhong*) to “mean races” (*jianzhong*). He phrased it in evenly balanced clauses reminiscent of his classical education: “Yellow and white are wise, red and black are stupid; yellow and white are rulers, red and black are slaves; yellow and white are united, red and black are scattered” (Tang 1968: 468).

The influence of social Darwinism

Selectively appropriating social-Darwinian theories, the reformers claimed that racial survival (*baozhong*) in a context of international competition was the inescapable consequence of profound evolutionary forces. Rather than appealing to Charles Darwin’s emphasis on competition between individuals of the same species, however, most reformers were inspired by Herbert Spencer’s focus on group selection. For reformers like **Yan Fu**, **Liang Qichao**, and Kang Youwei, processes of evolution were directed by the principle of racial grouping, as individuals of a race should unite in order to survive in the struggle for existence much as each cell contributed to the overall health of a living organism. Apart from the individualistic basis for competition, the reformers also ignored the neo-Darwinian emphasis on the branching process of evolution.

Dikötter on social evolutionary theories in China

Although we assume that evolutionary theories took on a life of their own very quickly in Europe and elsewhere, this is not always quite true. In some parts of the world, such as the United States and France, religion played a major role in dampening the spread of evolutionary theories, whereas in China or in Japan, they encountered very little cultural resistance. In the Arab world, some Christian intellectuals adopted popular slogans of struggle for survival, although in general, the theory of evolution was interpreted in terms of Quranic authority: most intellectuals rejected the evolutionist justification of war. Some translators of Darwin, for instance, replaced struggle and competition by cooperation and striving for the happiness of the whole, while others used evolutionary theory to appeal to the idea of mutual aid.

Even where evolutionary theories did spread, one must look at which particular interpretations were appropriated and which ones were abandoned. Evolutionary theories were not homogeneous; in fact, they could be linked to opposite political philosophies. Charles Darwin’s evolutionary theory, for instance, was quite different from Herbert **Spencer’s** in three respects—apart from the fact that Darwin never explicitly referred to humans in his theoretical work. First, Darwin emphasized evolution at the level of the individual. Individual giraffes or individual bees were the ones that carried forward evolutionary changes. For Herbert Spencer, the emphasis was on the group instead: entire species underwent an evolutionary process. Secondly, Darwinians viewed evolution as a

branching process of diversification as various species evolved over time: the human was a cousin of the ape rather than its descendant. For Spencerians, on the other hand, evolution was portrayed as a unilinear process: fish, pigs, monkeys, humans were all stages of a linear hierarchy. The human fetus went through all these different stages: if one took a human fetus at month two, it looked like a fish; at month eight, it resembled a monkey, with tail and hair; it shed the tail finally to become fully human at month nine. Spencer thus represented evolution as a ladder: some species went up the ladder further than others, but all initially shared the lower rungs.

The third distinction was that Darwin believed evolution to take place in discreet steps. Take the example of the giraffe. Giraffes, according to Darwinians, have very long necks because at some point one particular individual in the giraffe population was born by accident rather than design with a much longer neck. This neck allowed it to eat many more leaves near the top of the trees than others, thus surviving longer and having more descendants. For Spencer, on the other hand, it was not the individual giraffe with a longer neck that mattered. He believed that by stretching their necks all the time, giraffes as a group were born with longer and longer necks. Historians refer to this theory as the inheritance of acquired characteristics: characteristics acquired in a lifetime can be transmitted to the next generation. In the same vein, human groups can educate their children, who will then give birth to morally and physically better-endowed children, thus improving the overall quality of the population.

Needless to say, these are very different views on evolution. Neo-Darwinists emphasized individual competition, a view that became common in England in a climate of free capitalism at the end of the nineteenth century. Successful entrepreneurs could thus portray themselves as “fitter” to survive than others by virtue of an inherent superiority: I am rich and successful, why should I have to pay taxes that allow the poor and unfit to survive and have children, many wondered. I am fit to survive, you are fit to die, could well be one of the conclusions derived from the use of Charles Darwin’s theory to contemporary society.

From Herbert Spencer’s point of view, the group as a whole should fight against another group, regardless of the differences that might exist between the individuals of that group. It was this sort of evolutionary view that Yan Fu and other reformers proposed in China during the late nineteenth century. They emphasized the *qun*, or the “group,” at the expense of the individual. Individually, the reformers thought, we may be weak in our confrontation with the West, but united as a race we are—to use a currently popular term—*youxiu*, “superior.”

In this sort of evolutionary view, “race” was not understood to be a “genetically” fixed reality, but rather a very flexible and malleable essence open to improvement. Yan Fu, for example, did not believe that the “yellow race” was doomed to remain on an inferior rung of the ladder. He thought that social and economic progress could be translated into racial betterment. On the other hand, *jinhua*, or “evolution” (literally “advancement”) faced *tuihua*, or “devolution” (literally “regression”). His message of change thus carried a warning: if China failed to reform, the country might degenerate even further and descend on the scales of human evolution.

They adopted a Neo-Lamarckian theory of linear evolution, which viewed human development as a single line of ascent from the apes: the embryo developed in a purposeful way towards maturity, and this process could be guided by changes to the social and political environment. Neo-Lamarckism offered a flexible vision of evolu-

tion, which closely suited the political agenda of the reformers, as human progress in the realm of politics was seen to be conducive to the racial improvement of the species.

Anti-Manchu nationalism

The reformers proposed a form of constitutional monarchy that would include the Manchu emperor: their notion of a “yellow race” (*huangzhong*) was broad enough to include all the people living in the Middle Kingdom. In the wake of the abortive Hundred Days Reform of 1898, which ended when the empress dowager rescinded all the reform decrees and executed several reformer officials, a number of radical intellectuals started advocating the overthrow of the Manchu dynasty: not without resonance to the 1789 and 1848 political revolutions in Europe, the anti-Manchu revolutionaries represented the ruling élites as an inferior “race” which was responsible for the disastrous policies which had led to the decline of the country, while most inhabitants of China were perceived to be part of a homogeneous Han race. In search of national unity, the very notion of a Han race emerged in a relational context of opposition both to foreign powers and to the ruling Manchus. For the revolutionaries, the notion of a “yellow race” was not entirely adequate as it included the much-reviled Manchus. Whereas the reformers perceived race (*zhongzu*) as a biological extension of the lineage (*zu*), encompassing all people dwelling on the soil of the Yellow Emperor, the revolutionaries excluded the Mongols, Manchus, Tibetans, and other population groups from their definition of race, which was narrowed down to the Han, who were referred to as a *minzu*.

Minzu, a key term used interchangeably for both “ethnic group” and “nationality” after 1949, referred to a common descent group with a distinct culture and territory. During the incipient period of 1902 to 1911, moreover, *minzu* as a term was used to promote symbolic boundaries of blood and descent: “nationalities” as political units were equated with “races” as biological units. In the nationalist ideology of the first decade of this century, *minzu* was thought to be based on a quantifiable number of people called “Han,” a group with clear boundaries by virtue of imagined blood and descent. **Sun Yat-sen** became one of the principal proponents of a Chinese *minzu*, which he claimed was linked primarily by “common blood.” *Minzuzhuyi*, or “the doctrine of the *minzu*,” became the term used to translate into Chinese the ideology of nationalism, thus clearly indicating the overlap that was envisaged between nation and race. Nationalism was the first principle of Sun Yat-sen’s *Three Principles of the People*, and both the Kuomintang and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) have adopted it.

Elevating the figure of the Yellow Emperor to a national symbol sealed the myth of blood. The Yellow Emperor (*Huangdi*) was a mythical figure thought to have reigned from 2697 to 2597 BC. He was hailed as the first ancestor (*shizu*) of the Han race, and his portrait served as the frontispiece in many nationalist publications. From mid-1903, the revolutionaries started using dates based on the supposed birthday of the Yellow Emperor. Liu Shipei (1884–1919), for instance, published an article advocating the introduction of a calendar in which the foundation year corresponded to the birth of the Yellow Emperor. “They [the reformers] see the preservation of religion

[*baojiao*] as a handle, so they use the birth of Confucius as the starting date of the calendar; the purpose of our generation is the preservation of the race [*baozhong*], so we use the birth of the Yellow Emperor as a founding date” (Liu 1968: 1).

The vision of racial grouping elaborated by the revolutionaries fighting for the overthrow of the **Qing dynasty** is eloquently illustrated by Zou Rong, one of the more influential nationalists.

Dikötter on how to read a source text: Zou Rong, The Revolutionary Army (1903)

Zou Rong (1885–1905) studied in Japan, became an anti-Manchu revolutionary there, and died imprisoned by the Qing. His *Revolutionary Army* (1903), which called for the overthrow of the Qing and the establishment of a republic, was read very widely at the time. It gives the reader a flavor of the sort of tracts that were written before the fall of the empire, a sense of the vocabulary that was involved, and an insight into the structures of representation deployed by the revolutionaries. One tract, needless to say, is an insufficient basis for historical analysis: one would have to read—quite literally—dozens of them to see which particular aspects acquired a broader social significance.

The audience of the reformers in the 1890s was a very small number of highly educated elites, no more than one percent of the population at the very most. **Yan Fu** is tremendously difficult to read even for educated people in China today. As we move into the twentieth century, however, the language used by the nationalists becomes much more transparent, almost vernacular (*baihua*), very fluently written, with few complicated expressions or erudite metaphors. The medium of information is thus simplified and transformed by the nationalists, as they seek to address the largest number possible of people.

The Revolutionary Army belongs to this new trend of vernacular literature and is written in straightforward language. It is also replete with new terms that will become more permanent than they are at the time of writing. From 1894 to roughly 1902, there is a search for a new vocabulary to build a sense of national identity, to account for a rapidly changing world, and to construct a whole new social cosmology. This tract is one of the earliest ones in which the vocabulary is immediately recognizable by any reader today in China.

The first sentence of the Conclusion, Chapter 7, reads as follows: “*Wo huang Han minzu si wan wan nan nü tongbao, laonian, wannian, zhongnian, zhuangnian, shaonian, younian, qi geming.*” “You 400 millions of the great Han race, my fellow countrymen, whether man or woman, aged or elderly, in the prime of life, young or child, carry out this revolution.” This is a strikingly direct sentence. It is quite unusual because it very clearly assigns a finite number to the audience Zou Rong addresses: it quantifies the nation. Previously, the customary phrase for similar exhortations was *tianxia*, or “All under Heaven.” In Zou Rong’s text, “400 million” may or may not have been an “accurate” number, what counts is that it conveys a sense of a finite population, one of the essential ingredients of nationalism. Zou Rong does not refer to a vague number of people “under the heaven,” but to a finite number of individuals, a nation which is seen as a precious resource, young and old, male or female alike: the potential of every single one of them should be mobilized in the endeavor to construct a strong nation.

“*Wo huang Han minzu si wan wan nan nü tongbao*”—these too are very interesting terms. Look at e.g. *huang Han*: what is the meaning of the character *huang* in this sentence? It means “august,” or imperial. Zou Rong attempts not so much to destroy older

social hierarchies which prevent the emergence of a strong nation (the Manchu aristocracy), he tries instead to extend a sense of nobility to all the "commoners" of the nation: all the Han are imperial, not merely a few privileged individuals at court level. Furthermore, the term *huang* is pronounced in the same way as the *huang* that means "yellow": by implication, as the rest of the text makes clear, to be "yellow" is to be "imperial." The term Han, of course, excludes the Manchus, who are the ruling aristocracy.

In Chapter 4 there is a diagram that classifies various "races." We have *huangzhong*, "yellow race," which is divided into *Xiboliya renzhong* (Siberian race) and *Zhongguo renzhong* (Chinese race). One of the branches of the Chinese race is the Han race (the accent grave is to distinguish this word from the word Hân, Korean, which has a different tone). The Hân race is further identified as *Zhongguoren*, "the people of China." The other branches of the Chinese race are the Koreans, Tibetans, and other "East Asian peoples." The Siberian race includes, among others, Mongols, Manchus, Turks, and Hungarians and "other people of the yellow race in Europe." So the "yellow race" consists of two sub-branches, and within one subbranch the Hanzu, or Han "race," is equaled with *Zhongguoren*, or Chinese: nowhere is the equation of Han with Chinese made clearer.

To us now it may seem very clear who is a "Han" and who is a "Manchu." But human beings do not wait for official approval to move from one part of the country to another, marry, and have children. The so-called heartland of Manchuria had porous boundaries for centuries. In other words, somebody classified as "Han" here and somebody classified as Manchu there may very well speak the same dialect, eat the same food, pray to the same spirits and share the same job. On the other hand, if you take somebody classified as "Han" in the north of China and somebody near the Vietnam border, the differences in food, dialect and habits may be quite important. What I am trying to say here is that the "Han" is an artificial construct largely deployed for political purposes: Zou Rong wishes to overthrow the ruling Manchus. Since this tract is written at the very beginning of the twentieth century, when nationalism was still in an incipient stage, the boundaries he assigns to the "Han" are not clear yet. What matters to him is that the excluded Manchus are a minority and the "Han" a vast majority: a particular group can only be represented as a "minority" if one finds some "majority" as a polar opposite.

Sun Yat-sen later uses the terms of both *Zhonghua*—another newly mobilized term for China in a cultural/racial sense—and Han. He says very clearly that the Han are the vast majority, followed by the Mongols, Manchus, and other "minority" groups. Sun Yat-sen very much shares Zou Rong's worldview. Yet there is an important change in his views after 1911. To seek a strict correspondence between one group and one territory, as the doctrine of nationalism proposes, all the minorities who are not described as Han, or *Zhongguoren* (Chinese), would have to be expelled from China. The logical consequence of this approach would be that not only the Manchus, but also the Tibetans, Uyghurs, and others should be eliminated. Only one revolutionary, Zhang Binglin, also known as **Zhang Taiyan**, actually envisaged this. Zhang Binglin presses the nationalist rhetoric to its extreme and logical conclusion by proposing that China should be for the Han only, whereas Tibet, Mongolia, and Manchuria should be independent.

It is not difficult to see why other nationalists did not follow Zhang Binglin. After the fall of the empire in 1911, the rhetoric about "minorities" undergoes a sudden change precisely in order to preserve the political boundaries of the now defunct empire. Sun Yat-sen and others portray the "minorities" as too small and backward to obtain political independence, while the historical links between these population groups and the Han are emphasized: China is now represented as a family led by the Han.

A tension thus appears between the nationalist need to distinguish between Han and

others on the one hand, and the desire to maintain the imperial borders as inherited from the Qing on the other. These borders are still pretty much in place today: China remains an empire. To put it in a more controversial way: China has yet to decolonize.

Let us go back to the beginning of Chapter 7. The term *tongbao*, still current to this day, means “compatriot.” Literally, it means “couteral”—this may sound quite anatomical, but *bao* does refer to the uterus. *Tongbao* means “those who come from the same womb.”

Why does Zou Rong specifically mention “man or woman, aged or elderly”—“*nan nǚ tongbao, laonian, wannian, zhongnian, zhuangnian*”? To make his nationalist appeal all-inclusive. Regardless of one’s social status, if one belongs to the “400 million,” then one must become an active participant in the revolution. The text directly addresses every single one of the *tongbao*. The emotional power of nationalist tracts is thus that they create a sense of inclusion.

The next sentence reads: “It is the bounden duty of one and all.” The audience cannot ignore the national fate. If one reads the text further, one can see that Zou Rong heightens this sense of appeal by referring to the national territory as “your lands”: “your lands” is two-thirds of Asia, and “you are a fifth of the peoples of the globe.” A sense of power is projected onto the national unit. The Han are important economically and they are important numerically, unlike the Hawaiians, so often mentioned as a counterexample in these nationalist texts, in fact not even like the other archenemy: the “white race.”

“You possess the omen of the Yellow Peril, you possess the might of the sacred race.” “Yellow peril”—*huanghuo*—refers of course to a racist myth current in Europe at the time, a myth that suggests that hoards of “yellow” people in Asia, like Genghis Khan, might overwhelm and conquer the old world. The revolutionaries are acutely aware of the myth of the “yellow peril,” and turn this negative image into something very powerful: China as the future gravedigger of Europe.

The Manchus are singled out for special attention by Zou Rong. They are not just enemies, but “hereditary enemies,” which is a reference back to the anti-Manchu Ming loyalist writings of the mid-seventeenth century, when many refused to proclaim allegiance to the new Qing Emperor. This sort of anti-Manchu rhetoric also came to the forefront with the Taiping Rebellion.

“...The forest of guns and the rain of bullets ... sweep away the demons from the foreign parts who have infringed your sovereign rights.” Here appears a key notion of nationalism, namely that there is a sovereign people, a sovereign territory, and sovereign rights to be respected. “The stain on your history may be washed away, the honor of your country may soar. Your flag of independence already streams high among the clouds.” The idea of “a stain on history,” the notion of humiliated honor, is again part of nationalist rhetoric generally, not just in China. This notion becomes institutionalized in China after the 1911 revolution, mainly in the shape of a Humiliation Day, a national holiday during which all citizens have to remember how they have been humiliated by foreign aggressors. History itself, needless to say, is entirely rewritten in terms of “humiliation”: the “Unequal Treaties,” allegedly imposed by the European powers in the **Opium War**, are seen as the first in a long series of “humiliations” to the nation by the imperialist powers.

This accumulation of horrendous deeds by the enemies needs to be corrected. A sense of humiliation is used in the text in order to instill nationalism with emotional content: the reader should be outraged. Sun Yat-sen famously complained that people in China are like loose sand. He observed that while scholars were shocked into action by the defeat of China against Japan in 1894, most ordinary people could not care less about

these events. The theme of humiliation is thus a strategy which aims to instill a sense of shared responsibility in every individual of the nation, a rhetorical device which seeks to make the reader feel emotionally involved in the national mission of redemption, which consists in washing away the stains of history, in correcting the humiliation inflicted upon the motherland.

The last part of the text is interesting because it mentions the Republic of China, *Zhonghua Gongheguo*. This is one of the first appearances of the term *Zhonghua*, which is now one of the most common terms used to refer to China as a culture, a nation, or even a "race." In this particular text, however, *Zhonghua* refers specifically to the political system of the Republic.

"*Huang Han renzhong geming duli wan sui*," "Long live the revolutionary independence of the imperial Han race.." *Renzhong*—"race," "kind of people"—is used more or less interchangeably with *minzu*—"nation"—here and elsewhere in the text, the point being again that the nation is represented not as a mere political arrangement open to contestation but as a natural entity rooted in the incontrovertible laws of evolutionary biology.

Chapter 4 in *The Revolutionary Army*: A Chinese nationalist tract of 1903. The Hague: Mouton, 1968; pp. 106–110.

The yellow and white races which are to be found on the globe have been endowed by nature with intelligence and fighting capacity. They are fundamentally incapable of giving way to each other. Hence, glowering and poised for the fight, they have engaged in battle in the world of evolution, the great arena where strength and intelligence have clashed since earliest times, the great theatre where for so long natural selection and progress have been played out.

When men love their race, solidarity will arise internally, and what is outside will be repelled. Hence, to begin with, clans were united and other clans repelled; next, clans of villages were united, and clans of other villages were repelled; next, tribes were united and other tribes were repelled; finally people of a country were united and people of other countries were repelled. This is the general principle of the races of the world, and also a major reason why races engender history. I will demonstrate to my countrymen, to allow them to form their own impression, how our yellow race of which the Han race is part (and I refer you to the history of China) is able to unite itself and repel intruders.

The yellow races of Asia can be divided roughly into two groups, the races of China and the races of Siberia.

The races of China are spread over China Proper, Tibet, and part of Further India. They can be subdivided into three groups:

I. The Han race. This is the most exceptional race in Oriental history, and its members are precisely our fellow-countrymen. They occupy China Proper. They settled on the banks of the Yellow River and successively pushed out and colonized in the four directions. From the earliest times the moving force of East Asian civilization was none other than our great Han race. Korea and Japan also were colonized by us.

II. The Tibetan race. From western Tibet they spread to Kashmir, Nepal, and Burma. The Ti-chiang of the Yin and Chou periods, the Yüeh-chih of the Ch'in and Han periods, the T'u-fan of the T'ang period, the Tangut of the Southern Sung period, and so on, all belonged to this group.

III. The Cochinese race. From southwest China (Yunnan, Kueichow, etc.) they spread down into Annam, Siam and so on. In ancient times this race appears to have occupied China Proper and to have been gradually driven out by the Han people. The Miao people and the Ching-man of the pre-Chou period and the Nan-chao of the T'ang period belonged to this race.

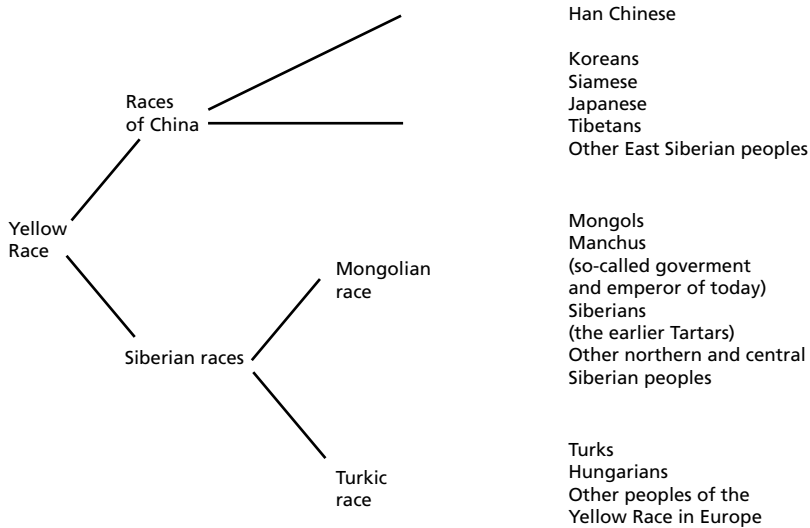
From the northern section of East Asia, the Siberian races colonized northern Asia. They can be subdivided into three races:

IV. The Mongolian race. Originally settled on the eastern shores of Lake Baikal in Siberia, they gradually moved South. Today they extend from Outer and Inner Mongolia to the T'ien-shan Northern Road. It was this race which gave rise to the Yüan dynasty, whereby they almost brought both Europe and Asia under one general. The Moghul Empire of India was also set up by this race.

V. The Tungus race. From northern Korea, they passed through Manchuria and spread to neighboring areas of the Amur River. The Tung-Hu (Eastern Hu) of the Ch'in and Han periods, the Hsien-pei of the post-Han period, the Mo-he of the Sui and T'ang periods, the Khitan of the T'ang period, the Jurchen of the Sung period and so on, all belonged to this race. The Manchus, who rule China now, also come from this race.

VI. The Turkic race. They were originally settled in Inner and Outer Mongolia. Later they shifted gradually westwards. Nowadays a great deal of Central Asia from the T'ien-shan Southern Road is occupied by this race. The Hsün-yu and Hsien-yü of the pre-Chou period, the Hsiung-nu of the Han period, the Jou-Jan of the Northern and Southern Dynasties, the T'u-chüeh of the Sui period, the Hui-he of the T'ang period, and so on, all belonged to this race. The present-day Turkey of Eastern Europe also was founded by this race.

Present day races which stand by themselves are tabulated as follows:



It can be seen from this that our great Han race, which sprang from the Yellow River Basin and the North-East, eventually to overflow in all directions, had already spread over the entire surface of China by the Ch'in and Han periods. China Proper was the homeland in which they flourished. By today the population has reached 400 millions, by far the greatest (of any nation) on earth, and to which no other people can compare. Those who emigrated beyond the Great Wall and into Tsinghai and Tibet amount to over 10 millions. Not less than three or four millions have crossed over into Japan, or in the north encroached on the Russian border on the east bank of the Amur. They have penetrated to the south, and entered Annam, Cochin, Cambodia, Siam, Burma, and the Malayan Peninsula. They have traveled beyond into the Pacific, to Hawaii, the United States, Canada, Peru, and Brazil. They have

passed beyond the Southern Archipelago and gone into the Philippines, to Java, Borneo, Australia, and Europe. If they had no capital at their back, they worked methodically without sparing themselves, and by dint of this surpassed the peoples of other countries. Those who had financial backing got together a capital of ten millions, and fought with great European and American merchants in the commercial market and they were not inferior. Such was the resourcefulness of our Han people, which was displayed in extending the prestige of their race, and it would not be an exaggeration to say that we Han are respected in the twentieth century as one playing a major role.

Is not the Han race (the fame of) whose motherland has so spread, the Han race which stands independent in the continent of Asia, is it the great nation of the Han race? Alas, the Han race may be numerous, but it is fit only to be the slave of other races; the lands of the Han may be broad, but they are fit only to be peopled by other races. Han men! Han men! You are no more than the submissive and loyal vassals of the Manchus. Han men! Han men! You are moreover recommended by the Manchus as slave for European and American countries. I had rather see the Han race extinct, killed to a man, dead to a man, rather than that they should leave and prosper, sing the praises of rivers and hills, and wander about for pleasure while under the heel of the Manchus. I had rather liquidate the Han race, kill them to a man, let them die to a man, rather than that they should be Hung Ch'eng-chous, "boys," interpreters, compradors or translators, at the beck and call of any nation in the world. I grieve for the Han race. When I think of race, my first thoughts go to the Han people.

Buttonhole a man and tell him: "Your father is not your real father, he is so-and-so." He will undoubtedly jump up furiously and go into the truth of the allegation before the matter is settled. Again, there is a family, with father and son, husband and wife and brothers all living peacefully together. Suddenly ruffians descend on the house, property is seized and the household enslaved. The whole family will fight to the death to get back their possessions before the incident is settled. As for saying to anyone that he has two fathers and he not getting angry, or the property of a family being stolen without a fight, such people are more dead than alive, mere stiff carcasses and whitened bones. I am particularly amazed that my fellow-countrymen will put up with things as a nation which they would not as individuals, they will put up with things as a nation which they would not as a family. Alas, when the Manchus entered the Passes, (the Han) were called "the submissive people of the Great Ch'ing dynasty"; when the Allied Armies took Peking, (the Han) were called the submissive people of such-and-such a country. The people of Hong Kong set up a memorial to Queen Victoria, with the words: "Her virtue was in harmony with heaven and earth." The people of Taiwan sang the merits of the Meiji emperor with the words: "His virtue is far reaching and his magnanimity great." The submissive peoples of the Great Chin, Great Yüan, Great Liao and Great Ch'ing dynasties have passed away, what are to come are the submissive peoples of the Great English, Great French, Great Russian, and Great American (dynasties). Because people are not clear about the distinction between their own race and alien races, men act as brigands and women as whores; they shame their ancestors and defile their clans: what else would you expect?

I put it to my fellow-countrymen, are not the kinsmen and fellow-countrymen of our Great Han people born and brought up on what were once the Nine Countries of the Tribute of Yü, and which are now the present day 18 provinces? Did they not come together to form the people of this country? Descendants of the Yellow Emperor, hallowed progeny, are not these titles the expression of the honor of the kinsmen and fellow-countrymen of our great Han people? Is it not the unchanging norm of race that which distinguishes the kinsmen and fellow-countrymen of our great Han race from barbarians of the North, South, East, and West? The Manchus do not intermarry with us, hence we are still the unsullied descendants of the Yellow Emperor. In a family there is always mutual affection and love, but no so towards strangers: it is a matter of attachment. How can my fellow-countrymen bear to see this greatest of dishonors, yet remained unmoved? Ireland was subject to the English, and their racial difference led to numerous clashes between them until they had obtained self-rule. There is a saying: "If they are not of your race, their hearts must be different." And another: "A wolf may be a cub, but it still has the ferocity of a wolf." Fellow-countrymen, think over these proverbs again and again. Should the impulse not take you to leap into the ocean, make the water well up, and cleanse

the shame and humiliation which you have brought upon yourselves by defiling your ancestors, insulting your clans and turning your men into rogues and your women into whores?

Chapter 7 in *The Revolutionary Army*: A Chinese nationalist tract of 1903. The Hague: Mouton, 1968; pp. 146–147.

You 400 millions of the great Han race, my fellow-countrymen, whether man or woman, aged or elderly, in the prime of life, young or child, carry out this revolution. It is the bounden duty of one and all. Think of it as the food and drink which is your daily necessity. You should not act rashly or throw yourselves away. Your lands occupy two thirds of Asia; fellow-countrymen, you are a fifth of the peoples of the globe. Your tea can provide drink for the countless millions of the world and more; your coal could provide fuel for the whole world for two thousand years and not run short. You possess the omen of the Yellow Peril, you possess the might of the sacred race. (...)

Gallop against your hereditary enemies the Manchus, your public enemy the clan of Aisin Gioro through the forest of guns and the rain of bullets, after which sweep away the demons from foreign parts who have infringed your sovereign rights. The stain on your history may be washed away, the honor of your country may soar. (...)

Long live the revolutionary independence of the great Han people.

Long live the Republic of China.

Long live the freedom of the 400 million fellow-countrymen of the Chinese Republic.

The revolutionaries constructed a new sense of identity that narrowly focused on the Han race, pictured as a perennial biological unit descended from a mythological ancestor. By 1911, culture, nation, and race had become coterminous for many revolutionaries fighting the **Qing dynasty**.

Racial discourse in republican China

The **Qing** empire collapsed in 1911, a momentous political event which was marked by a number of important developments, for instance the rapid transformation of the traditional gentry into powerful new elites, such as factory managers, bankers, lawyers, doctors, scientists, educators, and journalists. The result of new economic opportunities created through contacts with Western traders and the closer integration of the country into a global economy, the gradual emergence of new social formations was particularly pronounced in the large metropolises of the coast. Based on a common ground of social values, a sophisticated network of relations webbed intellectuals, urban notables, and financial elites together into a modernizing avant-garde.

With the collapse of the imperial system, moreover, neo-Confucian knowledge rapidly lost its credibility and authority. With the decline of conformity to the moral imperatives enshrined in a canon of Confucian texts, a growing number of modern-educated people believed “truth” to be encoded in a nature which only science could decrypt. Identity, ancestry, and meaning were buried deep inside the body: anthropology or genetics, by probing the body, could establish the “natural” differences between population groups. Modern science, in the eyes of modernizing elites, came to replace imperial cosmology as the epistemological foundation for claims about social order. These elites viewed race as a credible concept capable of promoting national unity after the collapse of the imperial system. Not only was “race” deemed to be an objective, universal and scientifically observable given, but it also fulfilled a

unifying role in the politics of the nation: it promoted unity against foreign aggressors and suppressed internal divisions. Even the “peasants with weather-beaten faces and mud-caked hands and feet” could be represented as the descendants of the Yellow Emperor, as “race” was a notion that could overarch gender, lineage, class, and region to conceptually integrate the country’s people into a powerful community organically linked by blood.

The dissemination of racial theories

Racial theories were not confined to the ruling elites concerned with the unity of the nation. With the rise of a new print culture, driven by many private publishing houses and by the general growth in literacy after the fall of the empire, a vernacular press appeared which facilitated the circulation of new forms of group identity. Public consumption of new publications that heralded the demise of “primitive races” and the regeneration of the “yellow race” contributed to the spread of racial theories. Racial categories of analysis, disseminated by the new print culture, were consolidated by endless references to science*. Chen Yucang (1889–1947), director of the Medical College of Tongji University and a secretary to the Legislative Yuan, boldly postulated that the degree of civilization was the only indicator of cranial weight: “If we compare the cranial weights of different people, the civilized are somewhat heavier than the savages, and the Chinese brain is a bit heavier than the European brain.” Liang Boqiang, in an oft-quoted study on the “Chinese race” published in 1926, took the blood’s “index of agglutination” as an indicator of purity, while the absence of body hair came to symbolize a biological boundary of the “Chinese race” for a popular writer like Lin Yutang (1895–1976), who even proclaimed that “on good authority from medical doctors, and from references in writing, one knows that a perfectly bare mons veneris is not uncommon in Chinese women.” Archaeologists, on the other hand, sought evidence of human beginnings in China. Like many of his contemporaries, Lin Yan cited the discovery of Beijing Man at Zhoukoudian as evidence that the “Chinese race” had existed on the soil of the Middle Kingdom since the earliest stage of civilization. Excavations supported his hypothesis by demonstrating that migrations had taken place only within the empire. It was concluded that China was inhabited by “the earth’s most ancient original inhabitants.”

Modernizing elites were instrumental in the dissemination of racial theories among the general public by means of school textbooks, anthropology exhibitions, and travel literature. Print culture even reached the lower levels of education, spreading racial theories via the curriculum. The opening sentence of a chapter on “human races” in a 1920 textbook for middle schools declared that “among the world’s races, there are strong and weak constitutions, there are black and white skins, there is hard and soft hair, there are superior and inferior cultures. A rapid overview shows that they are not of the same level.” Even in primary schools, readings on racial politics became part of the curriculum:

* This section is based on Dikötter 1992.

Mankind is divided into five races. The yellow and white races are relatively strong and intelligent. Because the other races are feeble and stupid, they are being exterminated by the white race. Only the yellow race competes with the white race. This is so-called evolution [...] Among the contemporary races that could be called superior, there are only the yellow and the white races. China is the yellow race.

Although it is clear that individual writers, political groups and academic institutions had different ideas about the meanings of physical features, many modern-educated people in China had come to identify themselves and others in terms of “race” by the end of the Republican period.

Some isolated voices in China openly contested the existence of a racial taxonomy in mankind: Zhang Junmai, for instance, wisely excluded “common blood” from his definition of the nation. Qi Sihe also criticized the use of racial categories of analysis in China, and pointed out how “race” was a declining notion in the West. Generally, however, racial discourse was a dominant practice, which cut across most political positions, from the fascist core of the **Kuomintang** to the communist theories of Li Dazhao. Its fundamental role in the construction of racialized boundaries between self and other, its powerful appeal to a sense of belonging based on presumed links of blood, its authoritative worldview in which cultural differences could be explained in terms of stable biological laws, all these aspects provided racial discourse with a singular resilience: it shaped the identity of millions of people in Republican China, as it had done for people in Europe and the United States.

Racial classifications between different population groups were so important that they often preceded and shaped real social encounters. The poet Wen Yiduo, for instance, sailed for the United States in 1922, but even on board his courage ebbed away as he felt increasingly apprehensive of racial discrimination in the West. In America he felt lonely and homesick: he described himself as the “Exiled Prisoner.” Wen Yiduo wrote home: “For a thoughtful young Chinese, the taste of life here in America is beyond description. When I return home for New Year, the year after next, I shall talk with you around the fire, I shall weep bitterly and shed tears to give vent to all the accumulated indignation. I have a nation, I have a history and a culture of five thousand years: how can this be inferior to the Americans?” His resentment against “the West” cumulated in a poem entitled “I am Chinese”:

I am Chinese, I am Chinese,
I am the divine blood of the Yellow Emperor,
I came from the highest place in the world,
Pamir is my ancestral place,

My race is like the Yellow River,
We flow down the Kunlun mountain slope,
We flow across the Asian continent,
From us have flown exquisite customs.
Mighty nation! Mighty nation!

It is undeniable that some Chinese students genuinely suffered from racial discrimination abroad, although an element of self-victimization and self-humiliation undoubtedly entered into the composition of such feelings. More importantly, however, they often interpreted their social encounters abroad from a cultural repertoire that reinforced the racialization of others. Even social experiences that had the potential to destabilize their sense of identity were appropriated and integrated into a racial frame of reference. Pan Guangdan, the most outspoken proponent of eugenics in China, expressed his disappointment with the unwillingness of a book entitled *The American Negro*, edited by Donald Young in 1928, to speak in terms of racial inequality:

But to be true to observable facts, in any given period of time sufficiently long for selection to take effect, races as groups are different, unequal, and there is no reason except one based upon sentiment why we cannot refer to them in terms of inferiority and superiority, when facts warrant us. It is to be suspected that the Jewish scholars, themselves belonging to a racial group which has long been unjustly discriminated against, have unwittingly developed among themselves a defensive mechanism which is influencing their judgements on racial questions. The reviewer recalls with regret that during his student days [in the United States] he had estranged some of his best Jewish friends for his candid views on the point of racial inequality.

The myth of the Jew

A few words on a curious aspect of the contemporary fascination with biopolitics in China, which is discussed in Zhou Xun's *Youtai: The Myth of the 'Jew' in Modern China* (1997). Even in China, where there are no "Jews," the image of the "Jew" assumes increasing importance roughly from the turn of the twentieth century onwards. Reformers like Liang Qichao do not only write about the "black race," the "yellow race," and the "white race." Many write about the "Jews" as well, and even in China today there are plenty of popular books which purport to reveal to the reader all the Jewish secrets to become a millionaire.

The image of the "Jew" is used in very contradictory ways in the writings of the nationalists. For Liang Qichao, for instance, the Jew represents the fate of the individual without a nation, a foreboding of what might happen if China does not stand up and fight to defend the homeland: the Chinese might become like the stateless Jew. On the other hand, Liang Qichao also views the "Jew" in highly positive terms: Jews are a resourceful and economically successful "race," however dispersed they may be over the globe. Here too the image of the Jew functions as an imaginary mirror of the Chinese: they may not have a nation, but they have survived in the midst of the enemy, which is the "white race": if the Jew can thrive in Europe, can the Chinese not succeed in Asia? Another recurrent image is that of the dirty Jew, which appears frequently in the republican period, although some writers point on the contrary at the unique intelligence of the Jew. Pan Guangdan, a popular author who wrote on eugenics in the 1930s, even conducted a study on the Jews to show that they had voluntarily applied a form of eugenics which accounted for their superior intelligence.

The conclusion of Zhou Xun's article is that the "Jew" attracts all sorts of extremely contradictory images in China. The "Jew" is a racialized "other" who functions as a distant mirror in the construction of a national "self" in modern China. Her work is also interesting because it shows that a cultural representation, which fulfils important cognitive functions, such as boundary demarcation, may appear without a social encounter necessarily taking place. In other words, a discourse about "Jews" can very well develop in a part of the globe that has no Jewish community.

Racialized identities in contemporary China

Racial theories were attacked as tools of imperialism following the Communist take-over in 1949 (Ubukata 1953), and university departments in such fields as genetics and anthropology were subsequently closed for political reasons in the early 1950s (anthropologists, for instance, were accused of having used disrespectful anthropometric methods that insulted the minority nationalities). While the CCP appealed to the notion of "class" as a unifying concept, it did not abandon the politically vital distinction between a Han majority on the one hand and a range of minorities on the other.

Not only did the CCP perpetuate the generic representation of linguistically and culturally diverse people in China as a homogeneous group called Han *minzu*, but they also swiftly proceeded to officially recognize 41 so-called "minority nationalities" (*shaoshu minzu*) who applied for nationality recognition after the founding of the People's Republic in 1949, a number which increased to 56 by the time of the 1982 census. As the political boundaries of the country recognized by the CCP corresponded largely to those of the **Qing** empire, minority populations in the strategically and economically vital border regions of Xinjiang and Tibet, for example, continued to be portrayed as both organically linked yet politically subordinate people in their relationship to the Han.

Although the idea of equality between different *minzu* was promoted by the CCP in order to combat "Han chauvinism" (*Da Han minzuzhuyi*), the representation of the Han as an absolute majority endowed with superior political and cultural attributes and hence destined to be the vanguard of the revolution and the forefront of economic development dominated official discourse during the Maoist period. Not entirely dissimilar to the racial taxonomies used by the revolutionaries at the beginning of the twentieth century, "minority nationalities" were represented as less evolved branches of people who needed the moral and political guidance of the Han in order to ascend on the scales of civilization. The representation of the Han as a politically more advanced and better-endowed *minzu* pervaded the early decades of the Communist regime, while assimilationist policies were also eagerly pursued. "Han" and "Chinese," in other words, were not only seen to be coterminous, but "minorities" continue to be portrayed as mere subbranches of a broader organic web destined to fuse into a single nation.

Polygenic theory: a Chinese homo sapiens

The emphasis on class struggle at the expense of economic development was reversed after the death of Mao Zedong in 1976. After the ascent to power of Deng Xiaoping in 1978, the language of science gradually started to replace communist ideology in a number of politically sensitive domains. Palaeoanthropological research illustrates how the assimilationist vision was reinvigorated by scientific research in the 1980s and 90s (the following two paragraphs draw on Dikötter 1998). Prominent researchers have represented Beijing Man at Zhoukoudian as the “ancestor” of the “mongoloid race” (*Menggu renzhong*). A great number of hominid teeth, skull fragments, and fossil apes have been discovered from different sites scattered over China since 1949, and these finds have been used to support the view that the “yellow race” (*huangzhong*) today is in a direct line of descent from its hominid ancestor in China. Although palaeoanthropologists in China acknowledge that the evidence from fossil material discovered so far points at Africa as the birthplace of mankind, highly regarded researchers like Jia Lanpo have repeatedly underlined that man’s real place of origin should be located in East Asia.

Wu Rukang, also one of the most respected palaeoanthropologists in China, has come very close to upholding a polygenist thesis (the idea that mankind has different origins) in mapping different geographical spaces for the “yellow race” (China), the “black race” (Africa) and the “white race” (Europe): „The fossils of homo sapiens discovered in China all prominently display the characteristics of the yellow race (...) pointing at the continuous nature between them, the yellow race and contemporary Chinese people.” Early hominids present in China since the early Middle Pleistocene (1 million years ago) are believed to be the basic stock to which all the population groups in the PRC can be traced back. Physical anthropologists have also invoked detailed craniological examinations to provide “irrefutable evidence” about a continuity in development between early hominids and the “modern mongoloid race.” Detailed studies of prehistoric fossil bones have been carried out to represent the nation’s racial past as characterized by the gradual emergence of a Han “majority” into which different “minorities” would have merged. As one close observer has noted, “In the West, scientists treat the Chinese fossil evidence as part of the broad picture of human evolution world-wide; in China, it is part of national history—an ancient and fragmentary part, it is true, but nonetheless one that is called upon to promote a unifying concept of unique origin and continuity within the Chinese nation” (Reader 1990: 111).

Anthropometric and genetic studies

Serological studies have also been carried out to highlight the biological proximity of all minorities to the Han. Mainly initiated by professor Zhao Tongmao, estimations of genetic distance based on gene frequency are claimed to have established that the racial differences between population groups living within China—including Tibetans, Mongols, and Uyghurs—are comparatively small. Serologists have also observed that the “Negroid race” and the “Caucasian race” are closer related to each other than to the “Mongoloid race.” Zhao Tongmao puts the Han at the very center of his chart, which branches out to gradually include other minority groups from China in a tree highlighting the genetic distance between “yellows” on the one hand and “whites”

and “blacks” on the other hand. The author hypothesizes that the genetic differences within the “yellow race” can be divided into a “northern” and a “southern” variation, which might even have different “origins.” His conclusion underlines that the Han are the main branch of the “yellow race” in China to which all the minority groups can be traced: the political boundaries of the PRC, in other words, appear to be founded on clear biological markers of genetic distance.

In a similar vein, skulls, hair, eyes, noses, ears, entire bodies, and even penises of thousands of subjects are routinely measured, weighed and assessed by anthropometrists who attempt to identify the “special characteristics” (*tezheng*) of minority populations. To take but one example, Zhang Zhenbiao, a notorious anthropometrist writing in the prestigious *Acta Anthropologica Sinica*, reaches the following conclusion after measurements of 145 Tibetans:

In conclusion, as demonstrated by the results of an investigation into the special characteristics of the heads and faces of contemporary Tibetans, their heads and faces are fundamentally similar to those of various other nationalities of our country, in particular to those of our country’s north and northwest (including the Han and national minorities). It is beyond doubt that the Tibetans and the other nationalities of our country descend from a common origin and belong, from the point of view of physical characteristics, to the same East-Asian type of yellow race [*huangzhongren de Dongya leixing*].

As a theory of common descent is constructed by scientific knowledge, the dominant Han are represented as the core of a “yellow race” which encompasses in its margins all the minority populations. Within both scientific institutions and government circles, different population groups in China are increasingly represented as one relatively homogeneous descent group with a unique origin and uninterrupted line of descent that can be traced back to the Yellow Emperor. Contemporary China, in short, is not so much a “civilization pretending to be a state,” in the words of Lucien Pye (Pye 1994: 58), but rather an empire claiming to be a race.

Eugenics

Medical circles, on the other hand, have been instrumental in the promotion of a eugenics program. On 25 November 1988, the Standing Committee of the National People’s Congress of Gansu Province passed the country’s first law prohibiting “mentally retarded people” from having children. Further laws for the improvement of the “gene pool” have been enforced since June 1995: people with hereditary, venereal, or reproductive disorders as well as severe mental illness or infectious diseases (often arbitrarily defined) are mandated to undergo sterilization, abortion, or celibacy in order to prevent “inferior births.” As Chen Muhua, Vice-President of the Standing Committee of the National People’s Congress and President of the Women’s Federation, declared a few years ago: “Eugenics not only affects the success of the state and the prosperity of the race, but also the well-being of the people and social stability.” Although eugenic legislation in itself does not inevitably entail the promotion of racial categories of analysis, since it focuses on the genetic fitness of individuals within a country rather than between population groups, some publications in demography none the less make claims about the “biological fitness” of the nation and herald the next century as

an era to be dominated by “biological competition” between the “white race” and the “yellow race.” The mastery of reproductive technologies and genetic engineering is seen to be crucial in this future battle of the genes, and the government has given much support to medical research in human genetics. A research team was even set up in November 1993 to isolate the quintessentially “Chinese genes” of the genetic code of human DNA.

The racialization of AIDS

Other aspects of racial nationalism could be noted, for instance the revival of the official cult of the Yellow Emperor, although it is important to note that outside the realm of science, many different and competing approaches to nationalism often coexist, invoking territory, language, history, or culture (Unger 1996): “race,” in other words, is a far less visible component of nationalism in contemporary China by the end of the century than it was before the Second World War. Only occasionally is racial nationalism expressed in a fairly unambivalent way, as during the anti-African riots on university campuses (Sullivan 1994). Far from being a manifestation of a vestigial form of xenophobia, these events belong to the racial nationalism that has been so diversely used in China since the end of the nineteenth century. Articulated in a distinct cultural site (university campuses) by a specific social group (university students) in the political context of the reforms initiated by Deng Xiaoping since 1978, campus racism demonstrated how contradictory discourses of “race” and “human rights” could be harnessed together in politicized oppositions to the state: six months after their mass demonstrations against Africans in Nanjing, alleged to have violated the purity of Chinese girls, students were occupying **Tiananmen Square** in the name of the nation.

Negative images of foreign sexuality, to a lesser extent, have contributed to the racialization of encounters between African and Chinese students, and have played a role in the spread of collective anxieties about STDs (Dikötter 1997). On popular levels, the myth of “international syphilis” (*guoji meidu*) has contrasted the pure blood of Chinese people to the polluted blood of outsiders, said to have become immune to syphilis after centuries of sexual promiscuity. Official discourse and popular culture have also explained AIDS as an evil from abroad, and prostitutes who offered their service to foreigners were singled out for severe punishment in the late 1980s. This official line of thought elicited a law on the mandatory testing of all foreign residents; African students in particular have been singled out for the AIDS test. From calls for the replacement of modern lavatories by Chinese-style toilets in the West, where excrement on toilet seats is claimed to be the main cause of AIDS, to pseudo-scientific studies of the “Chinese immune system” (thought to be inherently superior to the damaged bodies of Westerners), dubious theories of cultural and racial superiority articulated by some voices in the field of medical science have perpetuated a complacent attitude which does little to alert the population to the real dangers of infection. Instead of a virus which can potentially be contracted by every sexually active person, HIV/AIDS is represented as a fair retribution for sexual transgressions which mainly afflicts racial others. In their racialization of the disease, many of the publications on STDs produced by government circles and by medical institutions carry images of white and black AIDS sufferers; they interpret gay demonstrations in America as a

sign of the imminent collapse of “Western capitalist society.” “Primitive societies” in Africa are also criticized for their lack of moral fibre, in contrast to the virtues of socialism with Chinese characteristics.

Besides student demonstrations, even opponents to the regime have occasionally been eager to deploy racial categories of analysis as a unifying concept against the threat of “Western culture.” To take but one example, Yuan Hongbing, a lawyer at Beijing University who was briefly detained in February 1994 and has become a well-known figure in the public dissident movement, recently called for a “new heroicism” in order to save “the fate of the race” and for a “totalitarian” regime which would “fuse the weak, ignorant, and selfish individuals of the race into a powerful whole.” According to Yuan, only purification through blood and fire would provide a solution to China’s problems: “on the battlefield of racial competition the most moving clarion call is the concept of racial superiority (...) Only the fresh blood of others can prove the strength of one race” (Barmé 1995). Such voices, however, remain marginal, and it would be wrong to misinterpret the intense nationalism that has characterized the reform era as being exclusively “racial.” As indicated in the introduction to this chapter, the notion of race is heavily dependent on the language of science, which no longer carries the same prestige and credibility as it did before the Second World War. Group identity in the PRC, as in many other parts of the world, including the United States and Europe, is no longer predominantly constructed on the basis of perceived phenotypical differences and legitimized by references to the presumed objectivity of “science.” Outside the relatively new scientific circles that have appeared in the wake of the economic reforms, notions of race may be common among educated people but play a less explicit role in the politics of nationalism. It is precisely the lack of clear distinction between nation, ethnicity, and race, encompassed in the powerful but protean term *minzu*, which has come to distinguish nationalism in the post-Mao era on a far larger scale. Racial frames of reference have become implicit rather than explicit: as such, they are more difficult to attest and hence even harder to dispel.

Chinese: a problematic category

The term “Chinese,” whether referring restrictively only to the Han or more inclusively to the people of China, is a generic category comparable to the Victorian notion of “Anglo-Saxon”: it is assumed to be a race, a language, and a culture, even when its members are dispersed across the globe. Symptomatic of this phenomenon is the inclusion of Taiwan in most discussions of China, despite the radically different history, politics, cultures, and languages of the island-nation: it would be roughly comparable to a contemporary textbook on England which would expatiate on Australia and the United States. Not only is it assumed that “Chinese” is a shared language by most inhabitants of “Greater China,” despite ample evidence to the contrary, but also that all the “Chinese” are linked by virtue of descent.

It could be concluded that the racialization of identity has been central, rather than peripheral, in the politics of nationalism in China since 1895: precisely because of the extreme diversity of religious practices, family structures, spoken languages, and regional cultures of population groups that have been defined as “Chinese,” ideolo-

gies of descent which play on the notion of race have emerged as very powerful and cohesive forms of identity, used by the late **Qing** reformers, the anti-Manchu revolutionaries, the **Kuomintang** nationalists, or, more recently, by a number of educated circles in the PRC. The notion of race, while heavily dependent on the language of science, has undergone many reorientations since the end of the nineteenth century: its flexibility is part of its enduring appeal, as it constantly adapts to different political and social contexts, from the reformist movement in the 1890s to the eugenic policies of the CCP. It is not suggested here that race was the only significant form of identity available in China, but that notions of ethnicity, nation, and race have often been conflated in the politics of nationalism.

Since the erosion of Communist authority after the **Tiananmen incident** in 1989, nationalist sentiments have found a wider audience both within state circles and within relatively independent intellectual spheres. Intense nationalism arising in a potentially unstable empire with an embattled Communist Party could have important consequences for regional stability in that vital part of the world, as it reinforces the portrayal of frontier countries, from Taiwan to Tibet, as “organic” parts of the sacred territory of the descendants of the Yellow Emperor that should be defended by military power if necessary. Similar to the first decades of this century, moreover, the multiplication of regional identities and the emergence of cultural diversity could prompt a number of political figures to appeal to racialized senses of belonging in order to supersede internal divisions. In contrast, multiple identities, free choice of ethnicity, and ambiguity in group membership are not likely to appear as viable alternatives to the more essentialist models of group definition which have been deployed by a one-party state in charge of an empire.

Chapter 8

Outside In: Sino-Burmese Encounters

PENNY EDWARDS

Introduction

My current project, *Transnational Identities, National Ideologies and Buddhist Diplomacy in Sino-Myanmar Relations* explores the ways in which two state actors—Myanmar (Burma) and China—have used Buddhism as a vehicle for cultural diplomacy in the last decade. My focus is on state-regulated traffic in, and rhetoric about, Buddhist relics, Buddhist delegations, and official visits to Buddhist sites. By examining the linkages between Buddhist diplomacy and China's economic and strategic integration into Southeast Asia, I aim to emphasize how culture can be mobilized as a political commodity, and how cultural transactions can become intertwined, however precariously, tenuously, or unintentionally, with broader considerations of regional and national security.

Because this is a new project, I am in no position here to present conclusions. Instead, this chapter simply aims to frame some underlying questions and underscore some research directions that are pertinent to our collective project to decenter Chinese studies.

Like many other contributors to this project, I am interested in interrogating and subverting the notions of distinct and immutable “boundaries” around particular collectivities or countries. In this chapter, I examine boundaries from three main angles. First is spatial. I contest the notion of cartographic boundaries, and examine the disparity and disjuncture between the clean boundary lines represented on modern maps, which convey the impression of countries as both static and sealed, and the actual, material and human dynamics of life at, on, and across boundaries.

A second focus is on the conceptual boundaries of a nation and its culture, and how, and by whom, such boundaries are articulated and contested. To date my main interests in this area have been with the construction of ethnic identities (as with the Chinese in Cambodia, or Anglo-Burmese in Burma); with gendered identities (as with the bifurcation of gender norms in dress and etiquette which developed in Cambodia under colonial rule); with religious and national identities as with the crystallization of a notion of a specifically Cambodian national culture and the idealization of a particular type of Buddhism as Cambodia's “national religion,” processes which I examine in my forthcoming book *Cambodge: The Cultivation of a Nation, 1860–1945*. A common thread between these ostensibly different studies is the extent to which such emer-

gent identifications intersect with the “national space” and how they figure in the construction and validation of the idea of a “nation” in ways which materialize what Benedict Anderson so brilliantly and influentially dubbed an “imagined community.” In other words, I am interested in how the adoption of a particular style of costume as “national dress,” or a dish as a national

Anderson’s Imagined Communities
see Ong pp. 5–6

dish, to use two obvious examples, translate nationalist imaginings into the world as lived, worn, read, seen, and otherwise experienced by those who the modern nation claims as its subjects.

A third question running through this chapter relates to temporal boundaries, and to the interplay between the past and the present. Here I mean the way the past becomes segmented or packaged—in academic works, national historiographies, and a host of other media—into discrete time-capsules, through such labels as precolonial, colonial, and postcolonial; or “before” and “after” Mao. Such distinctions are useful, just as lines on a map are useful indications of where a country may begin and where it may end. But the danger is that they obliterate the spillover and linkages, those messy interfaces, which thread such periods together.

Although my research on Sino-Myanmar relations has a contemporary focus, my approach is not simply to explore the past 15 years but to contextualize recent developments in a historical framework that allows us to distinguish between what is “new” here and what is “old.” Such distinctions are important when examining contemporary political rhetoric and agendas, which often promote the idea that particular visions of nation, styles of government, or international relations are a simple continuum with the past.

Looking to history also allows us to explore both common genealogies linking southwestern China and Burma through intermarriage, cultural, and ethnic ties, and to highlight ways in which commercial and religious flows prefigured contemporary “transnational” movements. Unless we acknowledge such phenomena, we cannot fully understand or gauge the extent to which notions of a distinct, bounded “China” and “Burma” as cultural entities, national bodies, and geopolitical spaces have been artificially cultivated.

Edwards on her intellectual trajectory

The text I’ve written for this book is in part about circuits and in some ways my academic life has the same fish-in-a-goldfish-bowl feel, swimming in circles. I started out studying Chinese language and literature (School of Oriental and African Studies, London University, 1985). After several years working in China and London, I did a Masters in International Relations (MPhil Oxford, 1992) specializing in China and Southeast Asia, and wrote a thesis on Khmer Rouge relations with China. Further (happy) accidents of history led me to do a PhD in History (Monash University, Australia, 1999), which looked at Cambodian nationalism. After my PhD, I was lucky enough to get a postdoctoral fellowship at the Centre for Cross Cultural Research in Australia, where I broadened my geographic compass further through a combination of core research projects and conferences exploring

comparisons between Burmese and Cambodian cultural nationalisms, Aboriginal–Asian encounters and ethnic minorities in Chinese Diaspora. The latter two conference-projects were coordinated with the Centre for the Study of Chinese Southern Diaspora.

I'm never sure what to say when people ask me "what is your training?" The text I've written for this book is a very historical one. But quite often when I present on aspects of my work, people take me for an anthropologist. I suppose most of my professional experience has been anthropological in orientation, involving large amounts of fieldwork, analysis and report writing—whether as an Information Officer for the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (1992–93), as Head of the Chinese Research Unit for a UNDP-funded Interdisciplinary Research Project on Ethnic Groups in Cambodia (1995) or as an international banker working for several years in/between London, China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Eastern Europe (1997–99).

Finally, my list of specializations would not be complete without mention of my superb mastery of the art of unfinishing. My great unfinished project has been my book on nationalism in Cambodia, which is based on my PhD thesis, and for which I was awarded a book contract four years ago. Happily, the book is now very, very nearly finished and will be in press next year with Hawai'i University Press.

History in fragments

This chapter is deliberately disjointed, moving between cameos of border-crossing figures from the nineteenth century to analyses of such national symbols as the Great Wall, public works schemes such as the Burma Road, and contemporary rhetoric about Sino-Burmese relations.

I take this approach because I believe that a seamless, linear, chronological telling of history is as dissembling as the attempt to present a country as a flat, fold-out map. Just as we can dispute cartographic boundaries as visual rhetoric, and look instead to spaces of overlap, circuits, and a plurality of routes—sometimes converging, sometimes diverging—we can also approach history, that of China, of its relations to neighboring polities, as a series of fragments, a plurality of voices. This is a departure from the traditional voyeuristic approach to history, where the historian plays the all-seeing voyeur, looking back at time unfolding.

It's more a form of peep-show history, which reveals the past in glimpses, from different, often awkward and restricted angles, so that what we become most aware of is that which is always hidden and resists the linear interrogations of western historiographic enquiry. This mode of telling history as stories sometimes parallel, not always sequential, often only tenuously linked, is more suited to the new technologies *China Inside Out* is framed by. As I am at the threshold of this project, and have yet to glean oral histories, what I offer here is simply a refashioning of "mainstream" sources: books, pamphlets, bulletins, and newspapers, mostly in French and English, but some in Chinese and Burmese.

Religious diplomacy: official religions

The Buddhism that provides the framework for China's regional religious diplomacy is Theravada Buddhism. Practiced by Yunnan's extensive Dai population, Theravada Buddhism is also the most widespread form of Buddhism in Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia, and Laos, in all of which states it has received official unction as the "national religion."

In some respects, the way in which a "national religion" emerges is not dissimilar from the way in which a "national dish" emerges. Particular ingredients are included, others excised. In the case of the adoption of Theravada Buddhism as national religions in the above states, indigenous and European intellectuals often worked in concert, directly or via the circulation of scholarship and ideas, to decide what was "authentic" about Buddhism as practiced in each country and what was "inauthentic." Each country therefore saw the development and definition of a "national religion."

Prior to the establishment of colonial rule, however, there were no such distinct notions of a "Thai Buddhism" or a "Khmer national religion" and so forth. Instead, the region was laced with rest houses, tracks for pilgrimage to particular holy sites, for worship, or the pursuit of scriptural knowledge. Different schools of Buddhism co-existed, appeared, and grew through the sponsorship of monarchs and gifted, visionary monks.

Colonialism saw a remapping of this region, which had severe implications for the development of "nationalisms." Simply put, Burma became part of British India, and was encouraged to look away from China and Siam and towards India. Siam, which was never colonized, received attention and representations from all the European powers, but particularly from Britain, which was keen to create in Siam a zone of British influence that would act as a buffer against the intrusion of French interests into British Burma and India. These imperial splits were reinforced, particularly in French Indochina, by both government edicts curtailing movement of monks from Cambodia to Thailand, and by the activities of scholars and cultural institutions tailoring notions of a national religion. For example, "superstitions" were seen to be impure accretions that needed to be excised from national religion. Much of this process, like the definitions of the nation, involved a purification and "cleansing" of elements seen to be impure. Often, the "impurity" or "inauthenticity" of a belief, artwork, or scripture was seen to be a product of its "foreign" origin.

Whose periphery?

By interrogating boundaries, we can unsettle many assumptions, but most importantly for this *China Inside Out* project, we need to subvert a longstanding assumption that is still ingrained in much academic and popular discourse, namely the core-periphery model.

The core-periphery model became widely used in the 1970s–1990s as a framework to analyze relations of both colonial and postcolonial states to peoples and territories considered to be on their conceptual, ethnic, imperial, or strategic margins. The ready availability of signs and ciphers that point to circles—such as the term *Zhongguo* (Middle Kingdom) or the Theravada Buddhist concept of Mandala—have lent

fuel to contemporary applications of core-periphery paradigms to China as well as the various countries of Southeast Asia. The notion of a center had particular salience in China, which styled itself the middle kingdom (*zhong guo*) (Knapp 1998: 110–128).

Recent attempts to unlock Sinology from its often introverted gaze have subtly reinforced this model. The late political scientist Gerald Segal acknowledged the transnational links tying China's western and southwestern provinces to outlying regions, but qualified their importance with the Sinocentric argument that "there are few attractions on the other side of the frontier..." (Segal 1997: 60–64, 68). In the same vein, Stevan Harrell brackets China's ethnic minorities as "peripheral peoples" and accepts the model of a "civilizing project" and a "core-periphery" relationship transacted within a tightly bounded geographic space, as illustrated in the map chosen to accompany his volume, which renders China as a place unmoored in outer geographic space (Harrell 1997).

In the distant past, however, and increasingly in the present, the peoples of southern China relate to other "cores" than Beijing. Indeed, Beijing—both as a city and as the central power structures of the Chinese government and Communist Party, which it has come to symbolize in the popular imagination—is increasingly peripheral to the identifications of Yunnan's long-term ethnic minority residents.

History on the move: a tale of two pilgrims

In this part we will meet two people who moved to and through China and Burma in the nineteenth century. It's tempting to read them as border figures, as interlocutors between and across cultures, or figures defined by hyphens: a Muslim-Chinese, or a Sino-Burmese. But I'd like to avoid typecasting them in this way. The following cameos are fashioned from French and British accounts of Ma Dexing, born near Dali in Yunnan in 1798, and from the writings of Taw Sein Ko, who was born in Mandalay in Upper Burma in 1863. Taw Sein Ko was not guided by a sense of religious devotion, but he was in many ways a pilgrim to a new ideal: the secular nation-state, albeit in a colonial framework.

In emphasizing their movement, I've been inspired by the work of Arjun Appadurai (1993) and James Clifford (Clifford 1997), and also motivated by the constant elision of the mobility of the 'indigenous' in the European travelogues from which much of my work on Cambodia, Burma, and Yunnan has been drawn. The colonial travel genre necessarily emphasized the movement of the writer who revealed Asia—or its component, colonized parts—to his armchair audience in Paris, London, and elsewhere. One effect of this approach, with its descriptions of the author's passage by elephant, on horseback, by steamer, automobile or rail, is a constant inscription and reiteration of the "native" as a static, immobile feature. In his critique of European ethnographic approaches, Appadurai has marked a carryover of this trend into the western discipline of anthropology. In its focus on a particular location of fieldwork site, Appadurai remarks, European ethnographies have had the effect of "freezing" and "confining" and even "imprisoning" nonwhite people in particular locations. To Appadurai, this bounded approach can never represent the lives, in their totality, of those people who momentarily come under ethnological scrutiny: what results instead is a form of representational essentializing (Appadurai 1988: 39).

In Chinese studies, this emphasis on place has indeed been of great importance. The recognition of Confucian norms which value filial piety and place an onus on sons to honor parental and ancestral graves so as to guard the lineage, and of the importance of locality-based guilds and associations as channels of social organization both inside and outside China, have encouraged this focus. Conversely, scholars of Chinese communities outside China, in Chinese diaspora, have in recent decades sought to emphasize the attachment of Chinese migrants to their adoptive countries and to explore the diverse means by which Chinese have fashioned new territorial ties.

Building on Appadurai's thesis, Clifford calls for an overhaul of ethnographic practice and the study of "other" worlds and peoples. Ethnography, Clifford argues, is one of a number of colonial forms of knowledge production which have localized what is actually a regional, national, or global nexus and relegated to the margins the external relations and displacements of a "culture." Clifford argues against such a place-based approach which, in its specificity of focus and emphasis on locality, ensures that the messy edges of human lives and interactions get overlooked. Instead, Clifford argues for the need to consider "circuits" and to focus on the "cultural processes that complicate, cross, and cross up national boundaries and communities." Clifford stresses the need to consider "circuits" as opposed to just a single place and encourages us to think in terms of "itineraries" rather than bounded sites (Clifford 1997: 22–23, 37). Those itineraries might encompass diasporas, borderlands, immigration, migrancy, tourism, pilgrimage, and exile. A central question that Clifford raises is: to what extent is one group's core another's periphery?

This question probably never perplexed Ma Dexing, a Muslim cleric born near Dali in Yunnan at the close of the eighteenth century. Ma Dexing's Muslim identity is disguised by the homogenizing, sinic nomenclature common to all Chinese historic record keeping, in which non-Han are inscribed into history with Chinese names, and which effectively erases plural ethnicities, incorporating them into a single naming register (Jenner 1992: 226). This chapter explores the history and significance of walls from China's earliest dynasties to the 1990s, in managing various dynasties' control of the mobility of subjects as well as defense mechanisms against outside world. However, his surname Ma, meaning horse, does serve as a partial ethnic marker, as this was a common surname among Muslims in Yunnan on account of their common vocation as horsemen and muleteers. Europeans also opted for this dominant nomenclature: Ma Dexing's story, and that of the ensuing years of bloodshed and immense Muslim casualties in Dali, are told by E. Rocher in *La Province Chinoise du Yun-Nan Première Partie 1879* (Paris – Leroy, 1879).

Born in the valley of Xiaguan ten *li* from Dali prefecture in 1893, Ma Dexing completed some seventeen years of Chinese schooling, as well as schooling in Arabic at a mosque, followed by four years of Arabic and Islamic studies in Shaanxi, before deciding to make the *haj* and leave for Mecca. With 45 *taels* of gold in hand, he joined a caravan of merchants who traded between China and Burma, and traveled from Dali to Bhamo. From here he boated down the Irrawaddy to Ava and Rangoon, where, he joined other Muslims on a ship bound for Mecca. After a seven year sojourn in Mecca, Constantinople, Alexandria, and Singapore, Ma Dexing returned to Lin'an, in Yunnan, where he established himself as an influential Muslim cleric, authored several books

in Chinese, on astronomy and geography, and played a prominent part in protecting the interests of Muslims when war broke out between Muslim and Han Chinese miners during the 1860s.

Thinking in circles

In a recent essay, historian Anthony Reid has used the notion of a high center to argue for a saucer model of Southeast Asian identity, maintaining that Singapore functioned as the “center” for Siam, Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam by dint of its role as a major trade and transport hub.

Cambodia, Siam, and Vietnam had in the 18th century, Reid argues, largely fallen back on China for trade, but the establishment of Singapore changed their trading operations and regional orientation, shifting their commercial center to Singapore. Despite colonial and nationalist attempts to close off Singapore to India and Vietnam, it has retained this role, and is still “surrounded and lies in the middle” of Southeast Asia. He backs up this idea of a “circle” model of thinking with comments from the then Comintern agent Tan Melaka, in 1946, of an “Aslia”: “Make a circle [from Singapore] with a radius of 1500 miles. Inside this circle lie Burma, Annam, Siam, the Philippines, the whole of the Republic of Indonesia, and Australia. This is what we call Aslia (Asia-Australia)...” Other circular paradigms, albeit three-dimensional ones, were Japan’s notion of a Greater Co-Prosperity Sphere (Reid 1999: 14).

More recently, in 1988, scholar Huang Zhilian predicted the emergence of a Southwest China Circle linking Sichuan and Yunnan to Southeast Asia (Huang 1995: 19). Four years earlier, in 1984, the provincial administrations of Chengdu, Chongqing, Guangxi, Guizhou, Sichuan, Tibet, and Yunnan established the “Southwestern Economic Cooperation Zone”(SECZ) to pool economic efforts and resources and to focus central government attention on their needs and ambitions (d’Hooghe 1994: 295).

In 1992, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) mooted the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) as a framework for constructive engagement through infrastructural alignment. Despite its relative youth and its engineered birth, the GMS is by no means an artificial construct. Its constituent parts—the Chinese province of Yunnan, and the countries of Myanmar, Laos, Vietnam, Cambodia, and Thailand—share borders, common natural resources and a tightly interwoven history laced with cultural and ethnic ties. The region’s improving international relations in the wake of the Cold War thaw have fostered a keen desire on the part of international organizations and national governments to pave over old geopolitical fissures by harmonizing economic interests.

A central element of this plan is the Mekong River. The 4,180 kilometer long Mekong flows from western Tibet through Yunnan, serves as the boundary between Laos and Myanmar, runs through Cambodia and southern Vietnam where it empties into the South China Sea. In addition to its powerful symbolic appeal and central place in regional cultures, the long neglected Mekong offers huge hydropower potential. In order to tap this resource while reducing the potential for regional conflict over water resource management, the ADB has identified seventy-six projects totaling US\$15 billion. Predominantly in energy and transportation sectors, the projects are designed to promote export-led growth and enmesh all six countries in a web of economic and

infrastructural interdependence. China's vibrant economy and Thailand's commercial sophistication are lynchpins of the ADB initiative. Yunnan's population of 39 million and its rapidly developing industrial base make it potentially the strongest economic component of the region.

In his 1985 article, Pan Qi stressed Burma's potential as a channel for Chinese goods to the Indian Ocean and singled out the railheads in the northern Burmese towns of Myitkyina and Lashio as possible links in a future transport chain (Pan Qi, "Opening to the Southwest: An Expert Opinion," *Beijing Review*, 2 September 1985). In 1990, the Governor of Yunnan led a provincial delegation to Myanmar, Thailand, and Laos, and signed 33 cooperation agreements to pave the way for Yunnan's expansion of links with Southeast Asia. By 1992, Yunnan had prioritized transport networks as a key to accessing Southeast Asian markets. Basic roads and bridges in southern Yunnan province and northeast Thailand needed comprehensive rehabilitation, as did the poor roads and traffic conditions in neighboring Laos and Myanmar. That year, China staged an "Advance Towards Southeast Asia" conference at which provincial heads from Sichuan, Guangxi, and Yunnan discussed strategies to improve southwestern China's integration with Southeast Asia. Later that year, delegates from Sichuan, Yunnan, and Guangxi visited Southeast Asia to discuss economic, trade, technical and cultural exchange. In 1993, hundreds of Thai business delegates attended the first Kunming Export Commodities Fair, an annual event in Yunnan's Provincial Capital, established by State Council decree in 1992 to expand China's market share in Southeast Asia. In 1993, official media emphasized the province's role as a "key inland transport hub linking up Southeast Asian countries." In 1997, the Yunnan provincial government announced its priority plan to transform the area into "an economic corridor linking China with Southeast and South Asian countries" (Zheng Ling, "Opportunities Abound in Yunnan," *Beijing Review*, 10-16 February 1997, pp. 19-21). In June 1997, Yunnan invited 30 economists and business delegates from Myanmar, Thailand, Malaysia, and other Southeast Asian countries to discuss economic exchanges.

While clothed in the latest technological advance and the relatively new fabric of nation-statehood, this is no new development. Traditionally, Yunnan served as a crossroads for routes leading from the Yangtse region to Burma, and from Tibet to Tonkin. Stifled by regional tensions from 1950 until its resumption in 1984, Yunnan's border trade dates to the establishment of a trading artery in the second century BC. Indeed, China's rise was facilitated by international exchange through this "southern silk road," and maritime routes crisscrossing the South China Sea (Friedman 1994: 68). In the precolonial era, China enjoyed suzerainty relationships with the various Southeast Asian kingdoms, among them the fragmented polities which France and Britain reinvented into the Laos, Vietnam, Cambodia, and Myanmar we know today. The intrusion of western powers in the region caused a hiatus in China's traditional relations for over a century. Until 1954, France ruled Indochina (comprising the Protectorates of Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam). Myanmar was "British Burma." Although Siam (renamed Thailand in 1932) escaped colonization, Anglo-Gallic rivalry reined Siam into the British sphere of influence, earning it the description of a "semicolonial" state in recent scholarship.

From the 1950s to the 1980s, geopolitical fissures riddled the Mekong region. Cold War rivalries filled the vacuum left by colonial collapse as the US, China, and

the Soviet Union fought to expand ideological command over Southeast Asia's newly independent states. Direct military intervention and foreign patronage of resistance movements and governments kept the region divided until the early 1990s. The 1991 Paris Peace Accords that ended the Cambodian civil war brought a symbolic end to Cold War fault-lines in Southeast Asia. Since 1992, national governments and international and regional organizations such as the UN and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) have sought to underwrite the region's future interdependence through infrastructural links designed to promote transnational ties.

I use the term "transnational" to signal the fluidity with which objects, ideas, capital, and people now move across borders. This is of course no new development: the hermetically sealed state boundary and notions of exact geographical reach as contiguous with political power were largely introduced into the region by European powers. Yet technological advance and global change during the last decade have fundamentally altered the shape and symmetry of these ancient patterns of exchange.

The 1990s signaled a radically new stage in China's relations with Southeast Asia. The GMS provides a framework for this interaction and a model for regional cohesion underpinned by the natural magnetism of shared routes and resources. Funded by the ADB, private enterprise, national and provincial governments, the GMS road and rail network is tying China into the economies of Burma, Laos, Thailand, Vietnam, and Cambodia while providing China with land access to the Indian Ocean for the first time. In many respects, it is providing a counterbalance to the role of Singapore described by Reid. It is also resurrecting a region which has never been seen as such, but which has a centuries-long history as a cultural and geographic zone, dominated by ethnic Thai/Dai collectivities and polities. The cleavages of colonial cartographies coupled with the nation-state building project in late nineteenth and early twentieth century Siam literally saw this region fall off the map. Part of it was segmented into British Burma, whose administrators pressured China to rethink the region and to drive a line through parts of it. The establishment of Laos, in 1897, via the mapping and ethnographic projects of Auguste Pavie, further split this zone. Despite these projects, trade and religious networks across these new boundaries persisted well into the 1940s. In recent years, these networks have resurfaced at a grass-roots level, facilitated by bilateral and multilateral infrastructure projects.

If centers did figure in Ma Dexing's world-view, they are likely to have oscillated between his spiritual center in Mecca, the center of his later life as a leading Muslim cleric in the town of Linan in Yunnan, and are unlikely to have included either the political center of China, Beijing, or the trading center of Southeast Asia, Singapore.

Knowledge of boundaries and the boundaries of knowledge

Colonialism's preoccupation with mapping geographic boundaries was deflected in anthropology in interesting ways. Paralleling the dominance of bounded sites, the notions of boundaries became powerful analytical categories apparently applied across cultures at least some of which would not have had an equivalent term corresponding to this universalizing discourse of "boundaries." Chronologically, western anthropo-

logical interest in defining boundaries coincides in interesting ways with the geopolitical freezing and solidification of boundary lines in the Cold War. In the late 1960s and 1970s, for example, a number of scholars affirmed the importance of boundaries and thresholds for maintaining the coherence of social systems and physical transitions between social stages or different symbolic systems. In the 1980s, interest shifted to mechanisms by which artificial boundaries were cultivated to differentiate between ethnic groups. Initial scholarship in this area focused on the construction of ethnic identities and stereotypes of the colonized by European colonizers. Later interest turned to ways in which these boundaries had carried over into postcolonial regimes, as attempts were made to explain the racially framed violence and expulsion in, for example, Idi Amin's Uganda. Increasingly, scholars came to focus on how boundaries were both culturally and politically constructed and manipulated, and the role of external and internal actors in this boundary work.

Since the late 1980s, in parallel with the freeing up of political borders, greater mobility, transnational movements, many scholars across disciplines have called into question the usefulness of thinking in boundaries. In particular, the disciplines of history, human and cultural geography have begun to scrutinize the artificiality of cartographic boundaries. Thongchai Winichakul's (1994) *Siam Mapped* was the first book-length publication in this genre to critically examine the bounding of nations into what he calls "geo-bodies" in the nineteenth century, via the translation of western concepts of boundaries into the consolidation of state boundaries demarcating Siam from outer terrain.

In the past two decades, new forms in migration facilitated by political reform in China and transnational movements globally have opened up the boundaries of China, and the Chinese diaspora, to new scrutiny. An exciting new body of work, exemplified by Aihwa Ong, has shed light on the multiple itineraries and plural identifications of Chinese diaspora. This scholarship has emphasized plural identifications, but its focus on ethnic Chinese has seen the mapping of a particular "ethnoscape," to use Appadurai's (1993) terminology—a sort of global Sinoscape from which people identified as Chinese cannot easily escape. Much of this work has oscillated between cosmocrats—cosmopolitan elites whose habitus is the airport, international hotel, overseas boarding school and modern metropolis—and subalterns: refugees, the displaced and dispossessed whose temporary locale is between or on political borders, often in refugee camps or shanty towns.

At the same time, some of this work has suffered from an ahistorical approach, in that it has presented a view of contemporary Chinese diaspora as unequivocally "new," as much a product of the postmodern world as email, and as elusive and fleet-footed in its perceived resistance to laying down roots.

In their work on the Hmong diaspora, Louisa Schein (this volume) and Nicholas Tapp (Tapp 2002) have complicated this picture, as has Jacqueline Armijo-Hussein in her work on the contemporary and historical trajectories of *haj* (journeys to Mecca) by Hui Muslims from Yunnan to the Middle East (Armijo-Hussein 2002).

Sites of exchange: trading religions

In the late nineteenth century, long Chinese caravans of bullocks and mules were a familiar sight in the roads leading from the plains of Burma into the northern and southern Shan states. Similar caravans plied the roads from Yunnan via Dali to the Burmese frontier town of Bhamo. The muleteers and horsemen who carried goods and people from Dali to Burma were mostly Muslims. The trade to Mandalay was largely in the hands of Muslims and Chinese merchants. These trading routes also facilitated the flow in religious artifacts and pilgrimages, both Muslim—as we have seen in the case of Ma Dexing—and Buddhist.

Commodities of religious import also traveled the route taken by Ma Dexing, notably gold leaf, used to gild Buddhist statues and to embellish the *hti* or uppermost structure of pagodas, as a means of acquiring merit. In Dali, in the 1880s, gold leaf was being prepared to send to Burma. In addition, many muleteers returning to Yunnan brought back with them Shan *dhas* or knives, gongs, and betel boxes in Burmese silverwork (Colquhoun 1883: 255). From 1899–1900, gold leaf—“largely used for the decoration of pagodas and religious shrines”—was one of Yunnan’s largest imports to Burma, alongside horns and raw silk; while the chief exports are raw cotton, silk and woolen goods, twist, yarn and cotton piece goods. The total inland transfrontier trade between Burma and Yunnan was about £250,000 a year (Nisbet 1901). Buddhist monks also journeyed across these borderlands, between Sichuan, Yunnan, and Burma, carrying with them figures and images. In the late 1900s, one British traveler encountered at Wan Nian Si, a monastery in Puxie, “a small alabaster image of Gautama Buddha recently brought from Burma by a Chinese Buddhist monk who had been on pilgrimage to the shrines of Mandalay and Rangoon. The same pilgrim presented a colored picture of [the Burmese pagoda] Shwe Dagon, which monks at the Wan Nian Si temple regarded as a precious work of art” (Johnston 1908: 86–87).

Horizons of movement

The historical background which I am incorporating into my project on Sino-Myanmar relations aims to emphasize the longevity of human travel, trade networks, and cultural crossings tying Burma and China and to situate such traffic not “across” boundary lines but within a sort of hinge-zone or transit zone. This zone was not seen to require strict monitoring or surveillance, but acted as a form of shared terrain and site of exchange through which China interacted with its neighbors.

In his analysis of Southeast Asian polities, Benedict Anderson has used the notion of centrality, arguing that kingship organizes everything around a *high center*, but has also allowed for the fact that where “states were defined by centers, borders were porous and indistinct, and sovereignties faded imperceptibly into one another” (Anderson 1991: 19). These areas of merging, often vast tracts of mountainous or wooded terrain, are unlikely to have been seen as “corridors” or “transit zones” between distinct countries or cultures, in the time of Ma Dexing. European cartography had no space for such fuzzy, indeterminate areas, or “ambiguous mapping” as Prasenjit Duara calls it in his chapter.

By contrast, as Duara notes and as Richard Smith (1998) has shown in his work on mapping in China, distinct boundaries were not a feature of Qing Dynasty maps, which showed no obvious borders separating China from, or clearly delineating the individual kingdoms and territories of, mainland Southeast Asia as Russia, India, and Central Asia (cf. Hevia 1995). In a few cases written inscriptions marked boundaries; but only the oceans and seas allowed certain countries to appear fully separated from the Central Kingdom. Textual atten-

**Lomanov on Sino-Russian treaties
pre- and post-Westphalia see p. 44**

tion is given to the tributary system from the Song onwards, and by the Qing, the preface to each large-scale map outlined the tributary process and how barbarian envoys come to China and offer themselves as vassals of Qing dynasty. "This process of symbolic submission," Smith writes, "is always described as an arduous one, involving the crossing of such physical divides as mountains and oceans, and the scaling of a cultural divide involving several stages of translation." One such document, the *Huang Qing fanbu yaoliue*, from 1845—close to the year in which Ma Desheng made his *haj*—explains how barbarian tribes turned towards China: *xiang hua*. And yet, as we have seen from Ma Dexing's brief cameo, there also existed groups who fitted within that 'barbarian' rubric, who were situated on Chinese territory, but who were looking away from China.

This terminology—of scaling mountains, sailing seas, translations, and turnings—implies not a flat, Mercatorian model of mapping space nor a European obsession for the exact measurements of geopolitical boundaries, but a deeply layered sense of space where in place of clear neat linear boundaries that need to be crossed there are obstacles, journeys, rewards (Smith 1998: 82, 89).

Even those strongly tied with the "center" of the "Middle Kingdom," as Han scholars, writers, and officials, are likely to have visualized its boundaries not as distinct linear borders, but more as horizons of influence and contact. This notion is reflected in such terms for "boundary" as *fen-ye*, a compound of a character meaning to divide or part, and another character, *ye*, meaning both "wild" and "open country" and in another common character for boundary, *jie*, can also denote scope, extent, and realms. Similarly, Khmer and Burmese terms for boundaries existed in the nineteenth century, but like the Siamese terms analyzed by Thongchai Winichakul, these signified "areas, districts or frontiers" (Thongchai 1994: 75) and none correlated with the British notion of a "boundary" as a *line*.

Recently, several scholars have sought to come up with a cultural equivalent for the rugged terrain traversed by figures such as Ma Dexing and Taw Sein Ko. David Tomas posits the notion of transcultural spaces. These spatial zones between cultures, Tomas writes, are "by nature...difficult to perceive and analyze since they are fragmentary, transient, and thus rarely documented. They are the ephemera of cultural contact, events whose significance is rooted in the moment, and which have, as such, no 'historical efficacy'" (Tomas 1996: 15). Historian Greg Denning argues that boundaries and thresholds might have "no dimensions, no space of their own" but that special dimensions, spaces, and modes of symbolic articulation are invented. Denning uses the metaphor of "islands and beaches" to explain the dynamics of constantly shifting

group and individual identities. These islands are “less physical than cultural” since they “are the islands men and women make by the reality they attribute to their categories, their roles, their institutions, and the beaches they put around them with definitions of ‘we’ and ‘they’” (Denning 1980:3, 157). Of course, the invention of boundaries and their markings on maps did not radically and immediately alter such movements. Cartography was not always translated into colonial border zones: indeed, the crisp precision of a map may be read as the projection of colonial fantasies of control which could never be realized, or certainly not immediately realized, on the ground. Maps also acted as a means of gift-wrapping the conquests of colonialism for external audiences, in London, Paris, and elsewhere. These paper trophies belied the continuous crossings and pilgrimages that continued under colonialism. In cases such as Burma’s border with China, rugged terrain made tight monitoring next to impossible; but such tight monitoring was also not seen as entirely desirable. To the European powers, such trade corridors and crossover points had strategic use as windows or back doors onto Chinese territory.

In a recent paper examining the circuits of movement and strands of identification linking Buddhist monks from Yunnan to Buddhist monks in the Shan States of Burma and in Thailand in the 1990s and the present, historian Sarah Davis argues against the notion of a single center and for an appreciation of Theravada Buddhist relations to home, politics, and cosmologies as a system of overlapping webs. What is privileged here is a notion of a plurality of possible arenas of belonging and the sense that these were reconcilable (Davis 2001). This broad, expansive sense of belonging to multiple networks ran counter to European world-views in the nineteenth century. What European travelers, administrators and cartographers brought to Burma, China, and elsewhere was a restrictive and reductive view that tended to think in terms of bounded spaces.

In nationalist movements, maps have served as a highly potent weapon in turning linguistic and religious groupings into new national entities, not least because they give an explicit visual dimension to the idea of a nation. As Michael Herzfeld writes, maps “furnish emergent ethnic solidarities with expressive force and direction” and with what he terms the “carefully guarded spaces of cultural intimacy from which they may later emerge in resplendently militant and public form” (Herzfeld 1997: 13).

From the 1860s to 1890s, maps formed part of China’s self-strengthening movement, and study associations, books and journals devoted to geographic and cartographic issues burgeoned in China, as they were in England, France, and other European centers. Not until the late Qing did Chinese cartographers begin to produce their own colorful, modern looking maps (Smith 1998: 91). Japan’s victory in the Sino-Japanese war of 1894–5 struck the final death-blow to Chinese cartography. From now on, as Smith writes, “Chinese nationalism affected in fundamental ways the rendering of geographical space by cartographers in China” (Smith 1998: 74–75).

One way in which we can explore the formation of boundaries between Burma and China is through the life of Taw Sein Ko, born in Mandalay in 1863 of a Burmese mother and a father descended from Xiamen. As a boy, Taw Sein Ko was sent south to the colonial capital of Rangoon for schooling. On graduation from Rangoon College he joined the British colonial civil service and was later sent by the British gov-

ernment to study in Cambridge and London, as well as Chinese language and literature in Peking before being appointed the colonial government's Advisor on China and assisting with the Sino-Burmese Boundary commission in 1897.

Tracking Taw Sein Ko

Taw Sein Ko, the pioneer of western archaeology in British Burma, enjoyed a meteoric ascent through the colonial civil service, and was also a prolific writer. He was born in 1864 in Mandalay ("The Career of Mr. Taw Sein Ko," in *Burmese Sketches*, Vol. II, pp. 219–222; see also *Burma Gazette*, 6 December 1919). His ancestors were from Amoy (Xiamen, in southern China); he frequented Chinatown and its temples, and in later life called his Mandalay home "Peking Lodge." But these affiliations did not preclude other identifications. Taw Sein Ko, fluent in spoken and written Burmese, conversant with the Jataka tales, a promoter of Pali education, and deeply familiar with the lore and legend of Burma, is likely to have had a Burmese mother, and some monastic education. This cultural orientation had a localized dimension in his deep attachment to, and admiration for, Mandalay.

By the 1880s, some 13,000 Chinese from Singapore, Canton, and Fujian had settled in Burma, intermarrying with Burmese and becoming permanent citizens of the country. In this they formed no exception to "all the different races represented in Burma" which had, as one 1890s observer declared, "intermarried with the native Burmese forming mixed populations that became more mixed down generations" (Morrison 1972: 289).

Such mixing was reflected in the built environment. Mosques and Chinese Temples formed part of the cultural landscape of nineteenth century Rangoon and Mandalay, as did Armenian and Christian cemeteries. In addition to its European dwellings and Colonial clubs, Rangoon possessed a Jewish quarter, a Chinese quarter, a sizeable Indian population, two "Chinese Clubs" and a "Hong Kong Club" (Bird 1897). Even those monuments which have emerged as specific registers of a "Burmese" national identity, notably Shwedagon Pagoda, were polyethnic sites of worship, with Indians, Shans, Muslims, Burmese, Chinese, and others thronging their steps and shrines. The new temples of modernity, colonial schools, were similarly mixed. In 1894, Rangoon College counted four Europeans and over 540 Asians and Eurasians, including Chinese, Karens, Kachins, Shans, Hindus, and Malays, "both pure" as one observer commented in the language of the time, "and blended with the Burmese race" (Morrison 1972: 289).

Taw Sein Ko's deep familiarity with Pali and Burmese language and literature indicate that he spent his formative years in Burmese temple schooling. But as a boy he was sent to Rangoon College in the colonial capital, which had been annexed during the Second Anglo-Burmese War in 1852. On graduation, in about 1884, Taw Sein Ko joined the British Indian civil service. Soon thereafter he was assigned to assist with the 1885–1886 "Expedition" to Upper Burma: expedition being a euphemism for Britain's invasion of Upper Burma in the Third and final Anglo-Burmese War, in which the Burmese royal family was exiled to India, the monarchy abolished, and Upper Burma—including the northern frontier lands and posts of Myitkyina, the Shan states in which sizeable ethnic Thai population lived—annexed. In 1886, Taw Sein Ko

was part of the British occupation of the Royal Palace, working with the civilian head of the British administration in Upper Burma, Thirkell White.

That year, Taw Sein Ko wrote *Maung Po: A Product of Western Civilization*. Educated at a colonial school but discouraged from attending Calcutta University by his father, Maung Po is “A sharp lad. Boyish, full of spirit and ... fun ... more of an English boy, than a Burman boy born and bred in the enervating tropics.” He joins the Indian civil service as a clerk, and marries a Burmese woman who encourages him to pursue a life of secular intellectual engagement, through education and writings, so that he might “become the radiating center of an influence that [will] benefit, refine and elevate [his] fellow countrymen” and cultivate in them of “the Spirit of Patriotism” (“Maung Po: A Product of Western Civilization” [Excerpt] in Taw Sein Ko, *Burmese Sketches: Volume I* [Rangoon: British Burma Press, 1913], pp. 346–365).

Taw Sein Ko’s own life was shaped by a similar sense of vocation, as reflected in his numerous articles and speeches, promoting educational reform and popularizing knowledge of Burmese culture and history. In an early essay on *Moral Education* (1884), he welcomed the expansion of state schools under British rule, but expressed grave reservations at the lack of Buddhist tuition and the decline of Burma’s traditional books of morals. From the 1880s to 1910s, he emerged as a key advocate of both a university for Burma and female education.

In 1888, Taw Sein Ko was promoted to Government Translator. In 1891, he completed his first archaeological tour through Burma’s Mon country. His detailed findings, published in Bombay in 1893, advocated the preservation of the Mon language through the conservation of manuscripts and relics at Burma’s Bernard Free Library and Phayre Museum, as well as the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford, and the British Museum. In 1892, Taw Sein Ko spent a year at the Inner Temple, London, and Christ’s College, Cambridge. On his return to Burma in 1893, he was appointed Assistant Secretary and Government Translator.

In 1894, the Australian Sinologist George Morrison visited Burma and was introduced to a Government Translator of Taw Sein Ko’s description, fluent in Burmese, Pali, Hindustani, and Chinese, who gave him a tour of Rangoon’s Chinese quarter. So impressed was Morrison by this encounter that he penned lavish praise for Burma’s Sino-Burmese population. Emphasizing the willingness of Burmese women to intermarry, he alleged that “No one treats her so well as the Chinaman ... who is of a cognate race to her own, is hardworking, frugal, and industrious, permits her to live in idleness, and delights her with presents, loving her children with that affection which the Chinaman has ever been known to bestow upon his offspring” (Morrison 1972: 289–91).

In 1896, two years after the first Sino-British Boundary Treaty (1894), Taw Sein Ko was deputed to Peking to study language and literature. On his return to Burma in 1898, he was appointed Advisor on Chinese Affairs, in which capacity he played a significant role in the Sino-Burmese Boundary Commission, negotiating the second Sino-Burmese Boundary Treaty of 1897.

These treaties, followed by another in 1941, effectively demarcated the contemporary boundary line between Burma and China. Through that boundary, Britain hoped to make Burma and India coterminous by claiming the whole of the basin of the Irrawaddy River. China was reluctant to agree on any boundary through this area.

Sino-Burmese boundaries: 1894 and 1897

A focal point of these negotiations and of British settlement was the border town of Bhamo, a thriving entrepot for trade through which Chinese traders, most typically Yunnanese Muslim muleteers, plied their wares. Burmese rulers had expressed little interest in this area, which existed as a large no man's land, inhospitable but useful terrain. The *de facto* boundary followed a major watershed between the Irrawaddy and Salween rivers systems. It was ribbed with steep ridges that became progressively lower, merging into the lower Yunnan plateau. These valleys provided opportunities for intensive farming, and migrations along north-south axes. Following these routes, distinct ethnic groups had intermingled in a complex pattern, making it easier for Chinese and British interests to clash, and "harder to disentangle the indigenous patterns of political authority and loyalties" (Prescott 1977: 50–53). This historic presence led to strong opposition from China to British desires to drive a dividing line between these upper reaches and China.

"Much of this opposition," noted one observer in 1892, "can be traced to Chinese influence; all along the frontier, from here down to Bhamo, the Chinese traders have acquired a preponderating influence, and they strongly object to any attempts to gain information about the country" (Walker 1892: 167–68). One group in particular that exercised British attention was the region's large ethnic Tai population and its indigenous political formation into units, such as at Munglem and Kiangtong, which owed allegiance to both Burma and China. So strong were these entities that one leading British administrator advised their amalgamation into a 'Sino-British' condominium. This advice was never taken.

More recently, Davis has documented the Tai preponderance of both ethnic presence and political power in such regions, where Tai chieftains often sat alongside, and eclipsed in real power, nominal Chinese magistrates, ruling over populations that counted at best a handful of Han Chinese. Tais, in Davies view, were neither "fully assimilated by either empire," nor "receptive to proselytizing by other civilizing projects." Those in Southern Yunnan maintained "a high degree of local autonomy, a strong sense of local religious and linguistic identity, and alliances with neighboring states" (Davis 2001).

Following the 1894 boundary treaty, Bhamo was used as a garrison for Indian troops stationed there to keep an eye on the "Kachins" of Northeast Burma. In 1894, G. E. Morrison described Bhamo as a "wonderful mixture of types": "Nowhere in the world," he wrote, "is there a greater intermingling of races. Here live in cheerful proximity Britishers and Chinese, Shans and Kachins, Sikhs and Madrasis, Purgabis, Arabs, German Jews, and French Adventurers, American missionaries and Japanese ladies." In 1897, the Sino-Burmese Boundary was revised to incorporate approximately 3300 square kilometers of territory west of the Salween River into British Burma, including the whole state of Kokang. However, the precise renderings of this territory in clean lines on new maps belied the actual arrangements on the ground.

The treaty defined the frontier not only in physical terms (generally speaking as the watershed between the Salween and Mekong) but also in political terms, assigning the territories of certain local rulers to China or to Burma. Unfortunately, however, the two lines did not coincide. The territories of the chiefs would spill over the watershed;

moreover they were fluctuating and ill-defined, and were further complicated by the fact that some areas might owe a form of allegiance, indicated by the periodic payment of tribute, to two or three rulers at once. (W. S. Toller, "The Burma-Yunnan Boundary Commission," pts. 1, 2, *Eastern World*, May, June 1949.) In other words, local networks and politics, many of them predominantly Tai, resisted attempts to run boundaries between them and to slice up their allegiance, and retained a system of shifting or multiple political alliances.

However, these constellations of power and ethnicity did not reflect a clean-cut triangulation of Tai/Dai/Shan, Han and ethnic Burmese, but were further complicated by the presence of Yunnanese and Burmese Muslim and Chinese traders. Writing in 1901, one writer hailed Bhamo as an "emporium of ... Chinese muleteers coming down through Namkhan, our frontier town on the Shweli river ..." (Nisbet 1901: 36). The Anglo-Chinese Agreement of 1897 (Article XII.) provided for the construction of railways in Yunnan, if trade justified, and for these being connected with Burmese lines. A 56-mile track was laid between Bhamo and Namkhan, the frontier town on the Shweli River.

Bemoaning the alacrity with which "tribes" intermarried, one census-taker diagnosed Burma with a chronic case of "racial instability." This phenomenon, one official warned, was most acute at Burma's borders. To ease such fears and to help squeeze these fluid, plural ethnic identities into British census categories, Taw Sein Ko was tasked, in the 1910s, to write a history of the Burmese race. Unlike either India or British colonial society, with their rigid racial and social segmentation, Taw Sein Ko enthused, Burma had "no caste prejudice" and Burmese were extraordinarily tolerant and open to other races. The census-takers of 1901, 1911 and 1921 were less enthusiastic about such findings, and repeatedly expressed exasperation at the difficulty in naming and labeling.

In May 1899, propelled in part by parallel concerns with the vanishing of "Burmese culture," the establishment of an Archaeological Department of Burma was sanctioned. But it was not until December 1901, with Lord Curzon's visit to Pagan and Mandalay, that the Department was really set in motion. Appointed Government Archaeologist, a post he held in conjunction with other posts until 1916, Taw Sein served as an intermediary for particularly European views of temple conservation. In his 1891 report on the Mon country, Taw Sein Ko had been quite happy to leave temples in the custody of their longtime religious caretakers from within the community. But by 1901, he is enforcing a government ban on using temple maintenance funds for gilding or *pwe*—both traditional merit-seeking activities. This was the beginning of a dual tendency in Taw Sein Ko's writings, which would become more pronounced: the celebration of Burmese culture, as lived, and the parallel call for its conservation and museumization. By 1910, he is championing more active state intervention in religious conservation, indicating that the preservation of the "national culture" has become more important than the active practice of religion. Thus, in 1910, he denied permission for one "pious layman" to go about traditional merit-seeking activities by embellishing and regilding two shrines at Pagan. Increasingly, these visions led Taw Sein Ko to clash with figures of Buddhist authority commonly associated with Burma's nascent nationalist movement.

Given such stances, it would be easy to dismiss Taw Sein Ko as a "collaborator"

or another popular category in Southeast Asian nationalist historiographies, that of the “Chinese comprador.” Such characterizations fit nicely with the villain–hero/colonizer–colonized binary. But I prefer to see him in a different light.

With his Sino-Burmese parentage and upbringing, his British education, and later sojourns in London and Peking, Taw Sein Ko was both a racial and a cultural hybrid, and we glean a sense of European discomfort with this interloper between cultures, races, and status. Little space has been made for Taw Sein Ko in colonial historiography or its aftermath. In a rather cursory reference to Taw’s work with the archaeological survey, Gordon Hannington Luce dubbed him “a Chinaman.” A more recent publication has wrongly billed him as a Chinese civil servant from India.

Despite his work in determining the Sino-Burmese Boundary, Taw Sein Ko was himself a breaker of boundaries as an interface between three cultures: Chinese, Burmese, and British who in many ways personified that indeterminate, fuzzy border zone which resisted colonial attempts at demarcation and division. But he was also a bridge between two eras, that of the indigenous, traditional literati, or the “old order,” and the new one which emerged in colonialism’s wake.

The abolition of the monarchy meant that Burmese nationalists were denied the holy trinity of ‘nation–religion–king’ around which nationalists in Theravadan Cambodia and Thailand coined their new conceptions of nation. In Burma’s nationalist mantra, *ah-myo-bhartha-thatanaa* (race–language–religion), coined by the Young Men’s Buddhist Association in 1906, language took the place of “kingship.” Language and literature—their retrieval and revival, and placement on state and university school curriculum—became central pre-occupations of the young, western educated elite. Their efforts to identify and conserve a body of specifically Burmese cultural and national traditions owed much to individuals like Taw Sein Ko.

Alongside other gifted Burmese intellectuals, and in the same spirit as his contemporaries in the late Qing discussed elsewhere in this project by Frank Dikötter and others, Taw Sein Ko acted as a bridgemaker between the cosmologies of kingship and those of the secular nation-state. More specifically, he made way for such figures as Pe Maung Tin and later veterans of Burmese epigraphy, archaeology, and history who helped to map the contours of the conceptual, cultural Burmese “nation” on which nationalists built their visions.

Taw Sein Ko vanishes from archival view somewhere in the 1920s, which is where my version of his story ends, for now. By tracking it, I have tried to move away from a reading of history as a series of parallel strands moving back in cultural isolation as linear tracts of time, to be deciphered or filled in, and to focus instead on mapping those critical but often overlooked horizontal linkages, points of convergence and sites of interaction between and across cultures and spaces.

In his recent book on Burmese culture, Li Mou asks why European scholarship has to date placed exaggerated emphasis on Indian cultural influences in Burma, while downplaying China’s deep and historic connections with the country. Part of the answer, Li argues, lies in British colonialism’s downplaying or distorting Sino-Burmese histories (Li Mou and Jiang Yongren, *Miandian Wenhua Zonglun*. Beijing: Beijing Daxue Chubanshe, 2002, p. 351). Indeed, Britain did seek to make the contours of Burmese and Indian history and culture coterminous in the same way that they remapped the Sino-Burmese boundary. By emphasizing Burma’s common heritage with India, they

reiterated and naturalized its incorporation into British India. This formulation was only slightly complicated by the decision to grant Burma the status of a separate country in 1937, prior to which it was ruled as a province of India. But from this time on until Independence ten years later, Burma still sat within the “British Empire.”

Mapping new nationalisms

To nationalists, whether intellectuals, politicians, or government officials, the boundaries of a nation—the lines drawn around a nation-state, geographically, politically, and conceptually—are its most vital components. Without borders, the content of a nation—those things seized upon as its cultural characteristics, or national institutions—lose their meaning. The fact that technological and infrastructural development has facilitated the ease of crossing borders does not mean that this role of the border in bounding a national space is any less important. On the contrary: the more borders are crossed, the greater the need felt by governments and intellectuals to reaffirm and entrench those borders. In her work on the role of space and place in ethnic and national identity boundary formation, Ana Maria Alonso explores the equation of the majority ethnic group and a dominant ethnic identity with the core of the nation, and posits the notion of a “sedentarist nationalism.” Transnational movements and “displaced peoples,” Alonso argues, unsettle the identification of state, nation, and territory, leading modern nation states to construct a “pathology of the displaced.” Alonso examines culture not as a unified entity, but as the mundane practices of everyday life and focuses on the border zones within and between putatively homogeneous communities (Alonso 1994).

One way in which the Chinese government has responded to the challenge of countless people moving in and out of China, movements which threaten to destabilize and denaturalize the geographic and political construct of the Chinese state, is by retreating into a symbolic, cultural universe of national constructs over which it still feels it has considerable control.

Yunnan

China’s southwesternmost province, Yunnan borders Myanmar, Laos, and Vietnam to its west and south, and Tibet, Sichuan, Guizhou, and Guangxi to its north and east. A rough, mountainous land affected by the formation of the Himalayas, its highest point is Meili Snow Mountain, in the northwest, and its lowest is at Hekou, on the Vietnam border.

Yunnan’s position on the boundaries of Chinese and Southeast Asian civilizations was reflected in the dual tribute historically paid by local chieftains to the Burmese King and the Chinese emperor. Yunnan’s cultural proximity to Southeast Asia, and its geographical remoteness from China’s political center rendered it a haven for opponents of government. It remained under Mongol control after the fall of the Yuan dynasty until 1381. Population pressures in central China inspired Ming policy to “Sinify” the area through voluntary and forced Han migration in the seventeenth century (Clarke

1994: 226). Yunnan then became a center of Ming resistance to Manchu rule until Qing dynasty troops finally chased the last Ming emperor into Burma in 1658. Under the Qing, Han settlers continued to move into Yunnan.

During the Second World War, Kunming became the de facto military capital of unoccupied China and a hive of intellectual activity, attracting many scholars and students, sustaining a 60,000-strong refugee community. Yunnan remained the last bastion of anti-Communist forces well into the 1950s. After 1949, autonomous regions and districts were set up in zones where the minorities formed large enough communities, but population transfers in various political guises continued to alter the ethnic complexion of the province.

By the 1990s, Yunnan's population was over two thirds Han, the rest comprising thirty-two of China's fifty-six indigenous ethnic groups. Fifteen of these groups reside along southwest China's 4,060 km border, mingling with fellow ethnics in Myanmar, Laos, and Vietnam. The chief such groups are the Yi (Tibeto-Burman) at 4,054,000, also found in Laos and Vietnam; the Hani (Tibeto-Burman), 1,248,000, also found in Burma, Thailand, Laos and Vietnam; the Dai (Tai-Kedai), 1,014,000, also found in Thailand, Burma, Laos, and Vietnam and the Zhuang (Tai-Kedai), 1,003,000. Ethnic groups are concentrated in fairly cohesive enclaves. In Xishuangbanna, for example, the Dai alone comprise 35% of the population.

In 1993, Wu Guangfan, Secretary-General of Yunnan Provincial Government emphasized the salience of regional links and stressed the remoteness of Beijing, stating that "Close neighbors are better than distant relatives" (Lintner 1991: 21, Handley 1993: 69). But where central governments once took pains to rein such feelings in, the 1990s saw a radical reorientation in central directives. Symbolized by Deng Xiaoping's "Southern Tour," involving the top leader's high-profile visit to Guangdong and Shenzhen in 1992, this shift brought official endorsement and encouragement to Yunnan's vision of regional integration. In 1984, the provincial administrations of Chengdu, Chongqing, Guangxi, Guizhou, Sichuan, Tibet, and Yunnan established the "South-western Economic Cooperation Zone" (SECZ) to pool economic efforts and resources and to focus central government attention on their needs and ambitions (Hooghe 1994: 295). Despite the obvious economic benefits for Yunnan's inhabitants, this shift in emphasis away from Beijing-centric lines of vision was thought to require a complete rethinking by some senior government figures in Yunnan and its partner provinces in what now became known as the "Big Southwest." As one wrote in 1995, we must "liberate our thinking" and "turn our perspective around" so as to adopt this policy of "regionalization" (*quyuhua*) which was a prerequisite for Yunnan's economic integration with Southeast Asia.

As described by Governor of Yunnan He Zhiqiang, regionalization has effectively transformed Yunnan from a place on China's "periphery" to a "frontline." China was still "opening up"—but it was opening up in new directions, no longer just to Japan and Europe, but to Southeast Asia and South Asia. In this process of "throwing wide open the southern door and marching towards Asia," Yunnan held a critical role. But in order to exercise that role to full advantage, knowledge was needed: it was time for China to learn about the economies, cultures, societies, and regions on its southern frontier. Governor He's comments appeared in the preface to a book compiled by the Chinese historian of Burma He Dasheng (*Dangdai Miandian* [Contemporary Myan-

mar], Chengdu: Sichuan Renmin Chubanshe, 1993), one of a series of 'Practical Guides' to Southeast Asian countries compiled by the Yunnan Academy of Social Sciences, of which he is now Deputy Director. The series includes guides to Thailand, Laos, and Vietnam, and plans further additions on the Philippines and Indonesia. Its stated intent is a handbook for "penetrating new markets."

These new formulations—with their emphasis on outward mobility, and China's incorporation into this southern region—offer a direct reversal of historic narratives of nineteenth century China, which commonly use the term *xiang hua* (facing China/to China) to describe "barbarians" from the suzerain kingdoms making journeys to China. They reflect a repositioning of China in terms of its contemporary engagement with the region: and a recognition by the political "core" that these frontier zones may no longer be peripheral to Chinese interests.

Ethnic diplomacy

Increased economic interdependence and improved information technology in the Pacific Rim have softened cultural as well as political boundaries, altering provincial and national frames of identity. As we have seen, porous borders and shared histories, languages and ethnicities are cementing transnational links between Yunnan and Myanmar. Once the temporary edge of empires, China's political borders now form sensitive international boundaries which raise political problems of control and citizenship regarding the incorporation of ethnic minority groups. A case in point is the Dai, one of thirty-nine ethnic minority groups in Yunnan Province. Commodified as a "cultural resource" in official media, Yunnan's ethnic minorities are increasingly forming the focus of such regional diplomatic initiatives.

The Dai speak a language akin to modern Thai, celebrate Thai festivals, and share other traditions both with the Thai and with the Shan of Burma. In addition to these specific ethnic links, the Dai share Buddhist beliefs with the ethnic majorities of Burma, Laos, and Cambodia. But it is only during the last decade that Chinese authorities have actively advertised their existence to the region.

This cultural diplomacy began with a Dai-Thai encounter orchestrated in Xishuangbanna to cement Sino-Thai links in the early 1980s. Thousands of Thais now flock to Xishuangbanna annually to see their cultural roots. To the Thai tourist market, these tours are packaged as a means of reconnecting with an "authentic" Dai ancestry. The tourist sector in Yunnan has designed a number of attractions centering on ethnic minorities. A Dai nationality village was built on the banks of Dianchi Lake in Kunming in 1992 as the first ethnic enclave in the Haigeng Nationality and Cultural Village, a 580 hectare tourist complex scheduled to encompass 26 different ethnic minorities by 1995. Ethnic Dai from Ruili and Xishuangbanna reside in the artificial village, which incorporates Buddhist pagodas and bamboo houses and venues for tourists to sample Dai food, Dai music, and Dai dance (*Beijing Review*, April 21–27, 1997).

In 1996, Zheng Xiaoyun, Director of Yunnan's Cultural Anthropology Institute, asserted that "the integration of tourism, trade and ethnic culture can help promote economic development in the Dai regions" (*Beijing Review*, 25 April 1996). For Thailand, this cultural dialogue dovetails with government strategy to shift economic activity from Bangkok to the North and Northeast. In 1993, Thailand opened a consulate in

Kunming. In 1994, Kunming established a consulate in Songkhla. In 1996, Thailand invited official representatives from Yunnan, Laos, and Cambodia to Thailand for the Songkran (Water festival), which is celebrated by ethnic Thai in all four countries. A Thai Foreign Ministry working paper of 1996 stressed the potential of “common cultural practices” between ethnic Thai in diverse domains to promote “friendship and cooperation” (Michael Vatikiotis, “The Thais that Bind: Bangkok uses culture as a diplomatic tool,” *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 25 April 1996, p. 17).

Buddhist diplomacy

However inadequate or complex in their definition, the colonial regulation of Sino-Burmese boundaries had the effect of splintering this broad web of Tai-based Buddhist constituencies and indigenous polities.

Those Tai who found themselves in China’s borders were subject to a series of Sinicization initiatives following the establishment of the People’s Republic of China. These initiatives took the form of modernization and the rejection of a past that was rendered as obsolete (*jiu*) and bad in its “feudal” organization in favor of modern socialist cooperative organization. After a slow start, the people’s commune system was introduced among the Dai Lue of Xishuangbanna in 1966. Vestiges of feudalism were seen as not only being marked in the lifestyles, but ingrained into the organization of space and style of architecture. Eradication of feudalism in this era of high revolution necessitated the destruction, desecration, secularization, or neglect of temples and sacred sites. Han China’s *mission civilisatrice* took a particularly brutal shape during the forced assimilation drives of the Cultural Revolution.

After the central government renounced these policies of violence and adopted a policy of cultural conservation, these policies have been replaced with a different course of modernization. Since the early 1980s, to be modern, or anti-feudal, has required brick and cement construction of party offices, schools and so forth, in place of community centers traditionally organized around temples or in communal *sala*, raised wooden shelters which function as points of social organization and rest-houses for monks on pilgrimage throughout Theravada Southeast Asia.

Interestingly, notes anthropologist Jacques Lemoine, these modes of construction were so foreign to Dai that itinerant construction workers from the northern town of Dali were hired. In addition, Buddhist monks were invited from Moun Young in Burma to come and direct religious ceremonies and instruct their boys in monastic life and the Buddhist scriptures. In considering the economic role of the monastery in this process of reconstruction, Lemoine points to its role as an “incentive to produce more, save, and finally make donations to the monastic ceremony” (Lemoine 1989).

But of immediate interest to us here is the revival of common paths of travel and knowledge, which saw Burmese monks and workers from Dali once again converging in these borderlands. Since the 1980s, licensed Buddhist and Daoist shrines in China have flourished, drawing worshippers and donors in great numbers while the number of novices has also increased dramatically. This process is largely driven by grass-roots initiatives, often with overseas Chinese funding. However, official imperatives exist in the form of the PRC’s Overseas Chinese Office’s sponsoring and encourage-

ment of Temple and Ancestry Hall renovations as part of its program to attract overseas Chinese capital. But state-licensed Buddhism and Daoism are to a greater or lesser extent compromised by the accommodation they have reached with the regime. Noting how official Chinese Buddhists in particular have allowed themselves to be used in cultural propaganda and diplomacy, William Jenner has suggested that they might see the state's recognition as some compensation for the low esteem in which the Buddhist clergy has traditionally been held in China (Jenner 1992: 195).

In the past few years, Buddhist missions have emerged as a central element of this regional "cultural diplomacy." Symbolic of this trend was the high-profile Krathin (Buddhist merit-making) ceremony at a prominent Yunnanese monastery, sponsored by the Thai crown and attended by a delegation of Thai monks in November 1999. Such bilateral Buddhist ceremonies form part of a series of growing traffic in Buddhist delegations between China, Myanmar, and Thailand. This rise in officially regulated religious diplomacy reflects the increasing political significance of religion as a platform for state legitimacy in Southeast Asia.

Buddhist diplomacy and Myanmar

Like other modern Southeast Asian nations, various regimes in Burma have circumscribed and co-opted religion under the umbrella of the state. From the 1970s–1980s, Communist regimes in Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos tried to erase the populist role played by the Buddhist clergy. But since the 1990s, such states are increasingly aware of the power of Buddhism as both an element of nationalist rhetoric, a lynchpin of moral authority and political legitimacy, and a powerful tool of social control.

From 1962 to 1988, during Burma's isolation from the region and the world under Ne Win, Buddhism acted as a significant if little-publicized instrument for the internationalization of Burma. Select overseas missionary activities allowed the travel of privileged Buddhist organizations, whose contact with overseas Burmese communities represented the only permitted exchange with the outside world outside the diplomatic corps. From 1988 to 1990, Burma's military government actively and violently suppressed Buddhism, while orchestrating a smear campaign accusing opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi of "anti-Buddhist," anti-patriotic activities.

Faced with mass opposition from the influential Buddhist monkhood (*sangha*), culminating in the first known boycott of a Burmese government by the *sangha* from August and October 1990, and with no hope of securing political legitimacy following its massive defeat in the 1990 elections, the junta was forced to reverse this stance. A major public relations program to co-opt Buddhism was launched, alongside massive public works programs across the country to renovate and restore thousands of Buddhist temples. This policy aims simultaneously to convert temples—such as the Shwedagon Pagoda, a nodal point for the galvanization of opposition sentiment and the rallying of protests from 1988–90—from active sites to dormant monuments, and to advertise the junta's supposed Buddhist virtue as restorers of the temples. In tandem with this process, museums, TV programs, and media saturation have all been brought to bear by the junta in its attempts to rewrite a national history for Burma, foregrounding Buddhism and essentially delegitimizing non-Buddhist religions while homogenizing ethnic minority identities into a unifying "Myanmar" national discourse.

Government departments were also restructured to corral the *sangha* into government. The establishment of a new Department for the Propagation of the Sasana in June 1990 was followed in March 1992 by the reconstitution of the Ministry of Religious Affairs; a new awards system for the Sangha; the restoration of precolonial official recognition for monastic schools; and increased official news coverage and TV promotion of Buddhism. This domestic focus has an external parallel in the junta's active development of religious and cultural diplomacy as a strategic vehicle for tightening links with regional powers, notably China, but also Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, Singapore, and South Korea.

To this end, the junta has instituted new programs and funded schools for training Buddhist monks to missionize globally. From the late 1980s, both Myanmar and China framed or coordinated aspects of their diplomatic relations by both stressing historic linkages and cultural affinities between the two countries. In 1991, for example, the Chairman of the State Law and Order Restoration Council (the junta) visited the Tooth Relic Pagoda in Beijing, met with the Chinese Buddhist Association, and presented "a Buddha relic, relics of Arahata [sic, but = Arhat], Buddhist scriptures and cash donations" to a senior monk at Guang Ji Si monastery in Beijing (Bo Thanmai, *China Myanmar Goodwill Visits of Great Historic Significance*. Yangon (Rangoon): n.d., pp. 309–310).

Although such exchanges are executed at a senior, government to government level, involving limited meetings of individuals from both governments as well as Buddhist temples and associations, the surrounding rhetoric emphasizes a community of "Buddhists in Myanmar ... and the People's Republic of China" and their shared identities as "disciples of the Lord Buddha." At the same time, Myanmar media coverage of these events highlighted both the efforts which the Myanmar government would be making for the development of Buddhism in Myanmar, and emphasized that it would also be "helping the members of the Sangha making arrangements for them to visit the countries where [Buddhism] flourishes."

The Myanmar government has also invested considerable money and publicity in the restoration of the Tooth Relic Pagoda. A historic monument to Chinese–Burmese friendship and Buddhist relations, the Pagoda is a regular feature on Chinese delegation visits. In 1995, great fanfare accompanied the official return, from China, of the revered Buddhist tooth relic for installation in the pagoda after its "1500 years in China." Such visits are enshrined in official publications, such as *China Myanmar Goodwill Visits of Great Historic Significance*, an illustrated, English language pamphlet containing reprints of relevant news articles, photographs, and songs, published in Myanmar in 1997.

Similarly, a Chinese publication on Burma published in 1997, asking the question "how do we adapt [our policies, whether commercial or official] to [Burma's] habits and customs," stresses the value of religious diplomacy. Emphasizing that Burma is a "Buddhist country," the book asserts that "when Burma's national leaders are paying visits to overseas countries, providing there is a famous Buddhist pagoda or monk of high standing ... they will always ... request to pay a visit" to that site or monk (*Dangdai Miandian*, p. 494).

Official Myanmar media reports frame Sino-Burma relations with reference to Buddhist values, such as an April 1998 editorial that urged Myanmar people to turn

their back on the West while looking to the North and marching East. The article pointed to bridges, theatres, and youth centers built with Chinese aid, and stated that the PRC “has *metta* [loving kindness] and *catana* [benevolence] on us” (Sithu Nyein Aye, “Walking East while Looking North,” *New Light of Myanmar*, 8 April 1998: 5). In December 2000, Myanmar hosted a Chinese Buddhist mission led by the Vice-Chairman of the Buddhist Association of China.

National symbols: walling China in

James Clifford has urged us to “look behind configurations of a nation, of an authentic culture, or representations of transnational movements, and ask these questions: who is deploying nationality or transnationality, authenticity or hybridity, against whom, with what relative power and ability to sustain a hegemony?” (Clifford 1997: 10). Groups with a vested interest in mobilizing and manipulating particular images and visages of such movements include, but are not confined to, governments, nongovernmental organizations, international organizations, and nonstate actors, such as opposition groups either operating within a state, or in exile, or through a combination of approaches. They might also include commercial groups, such as those involved in ethnic tourism.

Images of antiquity are a prominent motif often used to legitimize particular governments by reiterating a supposed descent-line tying a contemporary regime to a mythical national past, as enshrined in a particular figure or building. An obvious example in China is the Yellow Emperor, the mythical founder of the Chinese “race” and empire. In Myanmar, King Anawratha, an eleventh century empire-builder whose subjugation of non-Burmese kingdoms is currently lauded in pageants, films, and soap-operas designed to stress a lineage between the current military government and past rulers, and to legitimize current projects of homogenization.

During the Mao era, all sorts of symbols and figures were mobilized to marshal support for communism and to galvanize patriotic sentiment. However, the fight against feudalism and the denunciation of much that was old as bad, and much of those symbols such as religious edifices and historic buildings, as ideologically rotten objects, meant that those features of China most often mobilized during this period were natural—such as the Yellow River. Figures who had been mobilized by the late nineteenth and early twentieth century nationalists, such as the Yellow Emperor, were discredited as oppressive. Instead, new models were cultivated: in addition to Mao himself, soldier-worker heroes such as **Lei Feng** became the stuff of politico-national myth. Similarly, monuments such as the Great Wall were deemed largely irrelevant: instead, China’s natural landscape was commonly invoked in both the poetry and propaganda of Mao.

After Deng Xiaoping came to power, the 1980s saw the discrediting of icons too closely associated with Mao, the rehabilitation of the Yellow Emperor as a national icon, and the promotion of the Great Wall. Promotion of the Great Wall as a symbol of China helped to anchor Deng’s regime in a time period not associated with the Cultural Revolution. As a motif that predated, and thus transcended, communist ideology, it also helped to cultivate a broader sense of membership and of belonging to China among Chinese Overseas, who were once again courted as a source of global capital and global goodwill.

At the same time, from the late 1980s onward, in a complex development which Geremie Barmé has examined through a collection of Chinese voices in his book *Shades of Mao* (1996), Chairman Mao himself became miniaturized, deified, and widely iconized, a process which has simultaneously inserted Mao's image very much into the present, from amulets dangling from taxi mirrors to marketing for a range of commodities, and through this idealization and lionization, has planted him and his governance very firmly in the past, and slicing him off from successor leaders and governments.

Some of the most potent national symbols are built monuments. They may be secular, such as China's Great Wall, or sacred, such as Myanmar's Shwedagon Pagoda. But by their very nature, nationalist projects end up investing the most sacred sites with layers of new, secular meaning—as sites whose constant reiteration with a particular nation ultimately deifies that nation.

Whatever the symbols deployed, their mobilization by governments generally has the effect not only of shoring up their own national legitimacy, but of *delegitimizing or marginalizing* certain groups. For example, the Great Wall is very much a product of northern China, with few parallels in southwestern provinces such as Yunnan. Similarly, promotion of the Buddhist Shwedagon Pagoda, and other Buddhist temples, as symbols of the state and nation in Myanmar appears to exclude Rohingya Muslims or Karen Christian populations from the official theatre of nation.

The anthropologist Gustaaf Houtman has written at length about this phenomenon in relation to contemporary Myanmar. He calls it "Myanmafication," and he explores various means by which the current government has strived to achieve a homogeneous image of Myanmar through the establishment of museums and preservation of monuments in ways that reflect their visions of the nation. Houtman interprets these constant displays of reverence for Buddha and of making merit as the government's display of wealth, power and patronage. The principal audience of these activities is not so much Buddha, but the Buddhist and lay population.

Houtman on Buddhist relics in nation-building:

www.therai.org.uk/pubs/at/museums/myanmar.html

Over time, the constant promotion of a feature of the built or natural environment ultimately leads to its acceptance as somehow eternally and intrinsically invested with the spirit of a nation. It gains a timelessness. However, the Great Wall was not popularized as a national symbol until the early to mid-1980s. This is interesting,

because it means that the promotion of the Great Wall as a national symbol, decisions about its value as national heritage, and campaigns to preserve and restore the Great Wall precisely coincided with the promulgation of Deng Xiaoping's "open door policy." Although a new development, this promotion of the Great Wall as a national symbol represented a political continuum in its reiteration of a specifically Northern Chinese feature as an all-encompassing motif.

This is not to say that the Great Wall had been absent: it had figured in popular culture, as in the phrase *fei dao Changcheng bu hao han* ["if you haven't been to the Great Wall you're not a good Han," or in another translation "not a real man"], and in "The March of the Volunteers," a popular revolutionary song by the playwright Tian Han:

*Arise! Ye who refuse to be bond slaves!
 With our very flesh and blood
 Let us build our new Great Wall.* (Translated by Li Baoqian from Chiang Yee)

That ditty was originally coined in the late 1930s, to muster morale for a quite different public works scheme: the Burma Road, designed not to close China off but to open China up to Southeast Asia and Allied territories during the Second World War and the Sino-Japanese War.

In the following section, I am going to consider the historic, political, and cultural uses and associations of walls in China that make the Great Wall such a potent symbol. Then I'm going to look at The Great Burma Road, built in the late 1930s, and speak about the historic porosity and permeability of southern China's boundaries, as well as different approaches to, and uses of, space in southern China.

Walls

Several Chinese dynasties invested extraordinary resources in walling themselves off from the outside world. An estimated 50,000 kilometers of defense wall was constructed along the northern frontier of China between the 6th century BC and the 16th century AD.

One of the few 'high-points' of Chinese architecture were watchtowers. In his seminal work, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*, Benedict Anderson emphasizes the role of the colonial state in Southeast Asia in introducing not only new classificatory systems but new modalities of state control, particularly relating to the monitoring of the traffic and flow of people. Evidence from China suggests that, in north China in particular, as early as the Han **dynasty**, some 2000 years ago, the state used walls, watchtowers and permits to monitor the mobility of its subjects: no one was allowed through the wall either way without an official permit.

But walls were not only used to mark and monitor the boundaries of a kingdom. They also assumed a significant function in the planning of cities and homes.

One of the current Chinese words for city, *cheng*, earlier had the meaning of "wall." In ancient and early medieval China, capital cities included not just a principal wall (*cheng*) but also an outer wall (*guo*) some distance beyond it that enclosed a much bigger area. These walls encircled other walled enclosures: palaces, government departments, and other official institutions, residential wards, markets and temples. In northern China especially, houses, which were commonly one-storey high and built on ground level (as opposed to houses in such southwestern border regions as Yunnan, for example, which were often built on stilts), were surrounded by walls that concealed them from the outside eye. These residences were designed not to look out onto the surrounding city: the walls were windowless. Instead, residents looked inward, onto courtyards or, in wealthier homes, a garden. Their only interface with the outside world was a gatekeeper or watchman. At night all perimeters were locked and sealed, and only the army patrolled the streets. This ensured the near-complete bifurcation of domestic/inner and urban/outer lives. The function of walls was enclosing and concealing.

This use of walls in Chinese city planning, boundary mapping, defense systems, and domestic architecture materialized and reaffirmed distinctions between *nei*

[inside] or *li* [inner] and *wai* [outside], which are replicated on many conceptual levels in Chinese nationalisms. The Chinese term for foreigner, for example, is *waiguoren*, which translates literally as out(er)-country-person. In his analysis of the practice of everyday space in rural northern Shaanxi (Xin Liu Yao 1998: 145), Xin Liu Yao demonstrates how the cultural distinctions between *li* and *wai* become embodied in everyday practice of domestic space.

Part of the potency of the Great Wall as a symbol of China in the western world has to do with notions of China as a hermetically sealed space, highly resistant to foreign influences. This image of China, and the salience of the Great Wall, were strengthened after the establishment of the People's Republic. The Mao era brought frontiers under very effective control. It became very difficult to leave China. This tightening of boundaries had a microcosmic dimension: within China, a series of check-in points and walls were constructed around enclaves or buildings housing foreigners. Such controls were not exclusive to China: they became a common feature of communist and socialist regimes.

In the 1980s, while government departments and state factories were busy promoting the Great Wall as a symbol of China, through posters, renovations, tourism, and souvenirs, filmmaker Zhang Jie promoted a different view of Chinese walls in his film *Raise the Red Lantern*. Almost entirely set and filmed within a walled residence of Beijing, the film evokes a suffocating atmosphere of enclosure. Walls symbolize the indestructible forces of patriarchal society, dramatized in the fate of its central protagonist, a young bride who goes insane. The bride is played by Chinese actress Gong Li, and the film charts her journey from rural China and the more architecturally open world of a village, evoked in sky-filled opening scenes, to the core of tradition. The transition between these two spaces is symbolized in the curtained sedan chair in which the bride is carried.

Owen Lattimore has suggested that one of the main purposes of China's elaborate frontier systems, including walls, was to keep the Chinese in. The lifestyles of different ethnic groups in Yunnan, and in particular the roads that connected cities and countries, homes and sites of worship or social centers, problematized this notion of a world confined to simple inner domestic and outer city or public spaces. One major dialect group, the Hakka, exemplify this dilemma in that they have traditionally been highly mobile, carrying their homes on their backs, and using cloth, instead of stone tablets, for commemorative and ritual purposes. At the same time, the Hakka have been known to build huge, circular walls around their communities on establishing settlements, at certain times in history.

Walls are helpful symbols, then, but they only tell part of the story.

The Burma Road

In the nineteenth century, competition between French and British ambitions to establish trade routes into China had seen two separate systems: the Myitkyina railroad, linking British Burma to Yunnan, and the Yunnan–Haiphong railway, built by French engineers, which linked Kunming to Hanoi in French Indochina. For much of the period from 1911 to 1949, warlords ruled Yunnan, and officials from Beijing used the

Indochinese railway to visit the province, preferring the Hanoi detour to Yunnan's bandit-ridden mountains (Bertil Lintner, "Pushing at the Door," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 28 March 1991: 28). Following the outbreak of the Second World War, the Indochinese railway was also used to transport war supplies from the European allies to China to circumvent Japan's naval blockade along China's coast. However, this line was physically damaged by Japanese bombardment of a key rail terminus in the late 1930s, and politically paralyzed by the Vichy victory of 1940, which saw Indochina fall into an alliance with Japan.

These developments focused urgent Allied interest on constructing a new land-route to reconnect Yunnan to the outside world: the Burma Road, built as a supply line for war materials from America and Britain, in the Allied fight against Japanese forces.

Plans for the Burma Road were announced in 1937 by the Central Government of China, which had opted for a route linking Kunming to Lashio, where the road would connect with the Burmese railway providing access to the deep-sea port of Rangoon. The public call for labor to build the Burma Road, Chiang Yee (1942: 54–55, 72) writes, attracted massive crowds to government in Kunming, whose willingness to labor on the road was fired both by promises of food for work, and popular sentiment to "beat the common enemy." This massive "voluntary labor scheme" involved extensive internal migration within Yunnan, as people left their home localities in groups ranging from a few to two thousand, to work on their assigned section on the road.

During the Sino-Japanese War Kunming became a target of what Chinese travel writer Chiang Yee called "the greatest mass migration in Chinese history," with daily influxes of people escaping the northern provinces of Hebei, Henan, Shandong, Jiangsu, Zhejiang, Anhui, Hubei, Jiangxi. These movements changed the cultural complexion of Kunming. Relocation of the seat of the Central Government to Chongqing in the neighboring province of Sichuan, and about 700 kilometers from Kunming, further enhanced Yunnan's importance to the war effort. Kunming, however, emerged as China's new **cultural capital** and the center of intellectual opposition activities. This changed status and the opportunities provided by the war-economy in late 1930s also attracted a number of Vietnamese stallholders and tailors to Kunming, and smaller numbers of French, Greeks, and Americans.

Burmese, Indian, and Chinese truckdrivers were particularly evident, and became more so as the construction of the Burma Road gathered pace. As described by Tan (1945: 128–130), the Chinese truckdrivers "all went hatless and wore chamois jackets—which they had bought in Rangoon if they were wealthy, in Tali if they were poor—and yellow khaki pants. Nearly every driver wore an ivory ring on the third finger of his right hand, with his name on it. He was forever having to sign something, and this was his 'chop', or personal seal."

A preliminary road was opened in 1938, 717 miles in length. Most of the Burma Road—some 600 miles, from Kunming to Wanting—sat within China's borders (Tan 1945: 1–2).

Construction of the road transformed both the socio-economic life and demographic complexion of several key sites. One was the highway terminus at Lashio, 117 miles from Wanting. "Once just a sleepy village," Lashio "hum[med] with a newfound prosperity," wrote Tan (1945: 151–153) and reflected a split personality: "New Lashio with its impressive government buildings, electric lights, water works, hotels, restau-

rants, offices, big bazaars, and English stores. Old Lashio, a backward native village with no improvements, where Shans, Indians, and Burmese all live together, governed by the Sawbwa [Shan Prince] of Hsinwei. In time, the Chinese built offices and a large trans-shipment center in old Lashio for moving goods from the Rangoon rail-head to the trucks bound for Kunming."

Tan's description resonates with much European colonial literature in nearby Indochina, where, as elsewhere in colonized Southeast Asia, the road became a significant trope of modernity and its "civilizing" projects. The "split" terrain described above was a common feature of such literature. In these narratives, modern roads bifurcate not only terrain but also time, driving cleavages between the "sleepy" stasis of "traditional" village life and the dynamic action of the present. These distinctions are reflected in a symbolic binary of the "straight" piercing, linear properties of the road and the "drowsy," twisting, narrow, and dusty trails which pre-existed it (Edwards 1998).

Paradoxically, the opening of the road complicated travel for Chinese in its first few years of operation, in some cases effectively slowing passage between the two cartographies of China and Burma. Prior to the opening of the Road, no passports had been required of Chinese moving between the two countries, but "after the opening of the Road," writes Tan (1945), "they had to show passports to go anywhere. Sometimes a great nuisance was made over it; sometimes they were never requested at all; one never knew what to expect." In 1942, writes Tan, when the Chinese military came in to cooperate with the British, the practice was abandoned altogether.

In the eyes of Tan, the borderline of the Shan states, marked by the city of Mangshih, the richest and largest of all the Shan towns, marked a cultural border, too: "From this point on, everything is strange. It is neither quite like China nor altogether like a foreign country. The people look just like other Chinese, but everything in the landscape is just slightly different." From the border to Rangoon, Tan writes, all the shopkeepers are either Indians or Chinese. The farmers, laborers, factory workers, truckdrivers, railway workers, stationmasters, cooks and waiters are mostly Indians. Rangoon was "the true terminus of the Burma Road. During critical months, China had no other seaport; and over its hustling wharves and through its noisy warehouses poured trucks and ammunition from the outside world—all the materiel that did so much to keep our nation in the war." At that point, goods were transported by rail from Canton to the provisional capital of Hankow, and on the French Indo-China Railway to Kunming.

Reinventing the Burma Road

Since the 1980s, globalization and China's internal reform program has seen the Burma Road resurrected and reinvented in ways which link Chinese road and rail routes with the Indian ocean, providing a channel to vital markets, and reflecting China's engagement with the region.

In 1999, over fifty years after the Burma Road labor teams laid a narrow, congested, and winding road from Chuxiong to Dali in 1941, Asian Development Bank (ADB) assistance enabled the upgrading of the route into the two-lane, bitumen Chuxiong–Dali highway, an official subsection of the Greater Mekong Economic Subregion (GMES) Ring Road. The Chuxiong–Dali highway is part of China's No. 320 National Trunk Highway, which begins in Shanghai, passes through Kunming, and ends in Ruili on the

Myanmar border. In terms of domestic impact, Chinese authorities see the Ring Road and the Chuxiong–Dali subsection as a key to economic development along existing growth poles in nonferrous metal industrial development, tourism, and light industry.

This road and rail network create new boundaries that cut across national political borders to map a new zone of travel and exchange, dubbed the “Economic Quadrangle” by international organizations, whose maintenance will be financed by a transnational toll network. The engine of the Greater Mekong Subregion’s planned future growth, this Economic Quadrangle spans northern Thailand, southern Yunnan, northwestern Laos, and eastern Myanmar. An ADB-backed circular route linking Chiang Rai, Jinghong, Myanmar, and Laos is expected to catalyze exploitation of the Quadrangle’s readily realizable economic potential.

China provided engineers, labor, and equipment to assist construction of the Burmese trunk of the Ring Road, which runs from Thailand’s northeastern cities of Chiang Rai and Mae Sai via Myanmar to Kunming. This section of the route is seen as a key conduit for Chinese travelers and businesses shipping products south from Kunming and Jinghong to ports in Thailand, Cambodia, and Vietnam. Chinese engineers have also improved the highway from Mandalay to Rangoon; while Chinese companies have developed a railway from Mandalay to Myitkyina, near the Chinese border, and a railway line from Mandalay to Yangon. By 1994, Mandalay had emerged as a thriving hub of Chinese business, as traders surged south from Yunnan in search of new markets (Bertil Lintner, “Enter the Dragon,” *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 22 December 1994: 22–24).

To combat or diffuse the centripetal pull of these new transborder routes, to enhance “national stability” by incorporating geographically isolated, socially marginalized, ethnically differentiated, and politically insulated communities in China’s border regions, and to galvanize interprovincial economic exchange, the Chinese Government has implemented a parallel upgrading and restructuring of domestic infrastructure. The Ministry of Communications recently published a 30-year development plan for the construction and improvement of national highways, waterways, and ports (Wu Bian, “Good Prospect,” *Beijing Review*, 19–25 May 1997: 21). A rapidly evolving road and rail network links Yunnan to southwestern China as well as to northwestern inland and southeastern coastal areas. In March 1997, one hundred years after the laying of tracks at Myitkyina, Premier Li Peng presided over the opening of the \$2.4 billion Nanning–Kunming railway, and applauded the railway’s potential for opening southwest China to the outside world (“Improvement of Urban Infrastructure,” *Beijing Review*, 7–13 April 1997).

But can these routes serve the center’s goals of advancing regional integration while reigning border provinces firmly into the national economy? The evidence suggests not. Controlling and planning the development of routes has proved easier than channeling the direction of traffic.

From its colonial inception to its realization in the Second World War, the Burma Road was primarily conceived as a reverse formula to that described by Li Peng: as a conduit *into* China—as a means of opening up China to British goods, or Anglo-American war supplies. Although existing trade routes from Yunnan to Burma were acknowledged, and trade continued, it was often construed as cultural traffic, which took such forms as gold leaf and Buddhist images. European and American visions for a railroad

into China, shaped by the power politics of high colonialism or the strategic exigencies of warfare, saw the Burma Road as allowing the outside world into China.

Returning to the title of this project, we could argue that the combined effects of globalization and Chinese nationalism as expressed or cultivated in government circles, have at once seen a downturn in the invocation of the Great Wall as the leitmotif of a Chinese nation, and simultaneously turned the Burmese Road inside out.

In its recent reincarnation, the Burma Road—as integrated into the new regional ring-road—is contributing to a material reintegration of Yunnan into Southeast Asia, and a redirecting of southwestern China’s gaze out, not in. This infrastructural alignment has paved the way for the transit and traffic in numerous fields outside the official and original intentions of both governments and international organizations. Smuggling in narcotics, humans, weapons, endangered species, and other profitable trades has burgeoned along these routes, tying pockets of Yunnan into a transnational criminal economy on an unprecedented scale. In turn, efforts to combat these malign transnational flows have encouraged a different form of regional integration, through multilateral and regional committees, both intergovernmental and professional—involving, for example, cross-country liaison between domestic as well as international law enforcement offices or medical bodies—on Illicit Substances, Human Trafficking, and AIDS. Here, the “Burma Road”—which I am using as shorthand for both the external links into the new Ring Road, and the internal links into China’s new and improved telecommunications system—can be seen as a symbol of those forces of transnationalism which are at once beyond the control of official governments, and at the same time lead those governments to assert new modalities of control, across borders but between centers.

At the same time, the new and improved “Burma Road” is symbolic of an apparently unprecedented appetite, most conspicuous among a new wave of domestic Chinese tourists. But is this really such a new phenomenon? For centuries, against great odds, Chinese seafarers and others, traveled and started new communities throughout Southeast Asia. Much attention has been paid to the push factors driving these migrations: these were refugees, on the run from fire, flood, and famine, driven to new shores only by desperation. As we saw earlier, narratives of the Confucian elite emphasize the Middle Kingdom-centric journeys and orientations of “barbarians” in and across the frontier. But these narratives reflect the elite thinking of writers who were often positioned both geographically and institutionally at China’s center. If we move away, not only from the center, but down towards those layers of society who formed the bulk of Chinese outmigration across the centuries, we begin to sense a much broader range of possibilities, both in terms of motivations for travel and avenues for identification.

In this exploratory essay, I have attempted to show ways in which the “new” Burma Road stands as a more convincing metaphor for the uneasy tensions between nationalism and transnationalism in contemporary China than the Great Wall. The Burma Road as known in western history is variously a project and product of British colonialism or Allied intervention. By shearing it off these specific histories and reading it instead as shorthand for a historic system of roads linking Yunnan and Burma, and so tying China into Southeast Asia, which existed long before European occupation and which has recently been resurrected long thereafter, the Burma Road becomes not a trophy of colonial expansion or wartime endeavor, but a frame through and from which we can view China not *from* a periphery—but China *as* periphery.

Chapter 9

Alterity Motives

DRU C. GLADNEY

“Tribes with Flags”?

The so-called war on terrorism and the ongoing irresolvable conflicts in the Middle East and Afghanistan have contributed to the widespread privileging of “tribal” and ethnic identifications in social and critical analyses of politics and culture. The notion “tribe,” after lying discarded in the waste bin of anthropological history for nearly two decades, has been redeployed in both popular and more scholarly depictions to account for the resurgence of ethnic nationalisms and communal identities around the globe. Self-appointed globalization experts have unwittingly concluded that globalization and nationalism go hand-in-hand, and that nationalism is but a modern form of tribalism. Popularly, the most notorious early example of this was Joel Kotkin’s book, *Tribes: How Race, Religion, and Identity Determine Success in the New Global Economy*, in which he argued that “tribal identities” (in this case, the Jews, Chinese, Japanese, British, and Indians) are at the basis of global business success (Kotkin 1992). Published by Random House, the author is said to be an “internationally recognized authority on global, economic, political and social trends” who invokes, in Arjun Appadurai’s critique, the “trope of the tribe” to explain the coupling of “race, religion, and identity” in the modern world order (Appadurai 1993: 423).

Although Kotkin’s is clearly a trade paperback articulation, it is remarkably mirrored in a growing scholarly literature that seeks to locate resurgent nationalisms in core, primordial essentialized identities, now portrayed as “tribes with flags” (Glass 1990). By contrast, this chapter will argue that people subscribe to certain represented identifications in particular highly contextualized social relationships. In the modern world, these identifications are often regulated by nation-states and limited to certain lines of stereotypical representation.

Though anthropologists discarded the notion of “tribe” over two decades ago, since it was felt that “tribe” was often only applied to less developed, non-Western societies (viz., “they are tribal; we are ethnic”), the idea of tribalism has resurfaced to explain the recent reassertions of identity politics as distant and diverse as Afghanistan, the former Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, South Asia, and Africa. Asia and Africa, given their rather recent colonial pasts and historic connections to nomadic and pastoralist societies, are most vulnerable to suggestions that it is “tribalism” that is at the core of the new resurgent identities (see Garthwaite 1993: 142).



Fig. 9.1. Some mosques in China look just like temples (Photo: Pál Nyíri)

The anthropological debate over the appropriateness of the term “tribe” for group identity

The debate over the appropriateness of the term “tribe” for group identity in anthropology is best summarized in the collections by Gulliver (1969) and Helm (1968). For later references to ethnicity as tribal, see Glass (1990), *Tribes with Flags: A Dangerous Passage through the Chaos of the Middle East*.

It is interesting that in the current ethnic national conflicts in Eastern Europe, rarely is the term tribal used, but it is frequently used to describe communal violence in Africa, the Middle East, and Central Asia, perhaps indicating a racist and developmental connotation in the term.

Imagined communities

By contrast, Benedict Anderson has led the way for a host of theorists in suggesting that national identity is best understood as historically contextualized, a socially constituted and constitutive process of imbuing “imagined communities” with the belief that they are somehow naturally linked by common identities (Anderson 1991).

Anderson’s Imagined Communities
see pp. 5–6

Characterized as constructionist, Andersonian approaches conceptualize identities as highly contested, multiple, constructed, and negotiated within and between the power relations of the nation-state, rather than naturalized and primordial (Gupta and Ferguson 1992, Malkki 1992). Nationalist ideologies become cultural productions (Befu 1993, Fox 1990), legitimized as inventions of tradition and narrated as social histories (Hobsbawm 1983, Tonkin, McDonald and Chapman 1989).

While it has perhaps become axiomatic that ideas of identity, ethnicity, and nationality are socially constructed, the problem with suggesting that these identities are

generally “imagined” is that Anderson is often taken too literally (in ways he may have never imagined), as if ethnic and national identities were completely “invented” (to use Hobsbawm’s and Ranger’s formulation which can be, and is just as often as Anderson, completely misconstrued) out of thin air, a fiction of the collective imaginary, or an idea which arose in the smoke-filled drawing rooms of a few nouveau British aristocrats (as Greenfield 1992 seems to suggest). As a corrective, this text was written out of a desire to locate the rise of nationalism (and its contemporary challenges) in particular moments of history, coterminous but not synonymous with the end of empire, the rise of colonialism, the expansion of global capital, and the domination of groups gradually classified and taxonomized as subject peoples, ethnicities, and eventually nations. A related subtext of this chapter is the attempt to inject social theoretical issues into the current writing on Central and Inner Asia. Long closed to non-Soviet scholars and non-Russian speakers, the region is now open to a wide range of travelers, writers, developers, and investigators who are beginning to have a better idea of what is going on, but have rarely seriously theorized or problematized why we see Central Asia in certain ways, and how Central Asians might see each other.

Gladney on the centrality of Central Asia

That we see Central Asia as somehow “Central” (to what?) or “Inner” (as opposed to outer?) is theorized in a forthcoming paper. The region’s centrality is taken for granted and vehemently argued by most Central Asianists (see Frank 1992).

Thinking beyond the nation?

This is why I take issue with Appadurai’s rather idealistic urging to begin “thinking beyond the nation” to a time when the nation-state no longer exists (Appadurai 1996, see also Schein’s reading of the article in her chapter). In more recent writing, Appadurai has argued that globalism has contributed to a heightened localism, a translocalism, that reaches beyond the nation-state to imagined national identities that transcend space and time (Appadurai 2001). He continues to advocate a move “beyond nationalism” to a rather individualistic, particularistic state where Adam Smith-like actors think of themselves and their neighbor first, before their nation or communal identifications. In light of recent events in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, this must be called “wishful thinking beyond the nation.” Similarly, Hobsbawm has theorized that “nations exist ... in the context of a particular stage of technological and economic development” (Hobsbawm 1991: 9). When he wrote that just over a decade ago, he too apparently idealized that the late modern stage of national identities would be superseded by something less nasty. Nations and ethnic or linguistic groups, he prophesized, should be “retreating before, resisting, adapting to, and being absorbed or dislocated by, the new supranational restructuring of the globe” to the extent that nationalism “is no longer a major vector of historical development” (Hobsbawm 1991: 182). This idea would certainly not account for the current struggles for nationhood and cultural survival in Bosnia, Rwanda, Tibet, much of contemporary Central

Asia, and even Quebec (Handler 1988). These trends indicate that the current constructions of identity politics in the form of ethnic nationalisms represent something more than the reemergence of tribalism, nor are they confined to the so-called "Third World." These "globalization idealists" see global individualism as the goal toward which we all should strive, holding us back is recidivist "tribal" and "ethnic" identities that lead to cultural lustration, racialization, and ethnocentrism.

Here I think Greenfeld is correct in suggesting that as long as nationalism is perceived as the "constitutive principle of modernity" (with the term "perceived" most operative here), postnationalism will only arise with a realized postmodernity, and for that we have a long way to go (Greenfeld 1992: 491). Milošević, the new leaders of the 15 nations of the former USSR, and other would-be national leaders in Chechnya, Abkhazia, and Somalia are busily making more nations, not thinking beyond them. Those most engaged thinking beyond the nation-state generally occupy positions of privilege and supranationality where, like Homi Bhabha (1994), they are able to move from home to home (or more appropriately, house to house) in Chicago, London, and New Delhi, without having to rely on communal or ethnic connections for survival or continued cash flow.

The argument of this chapter

Gladney on his approach

It was through interviews with many of the people I spent time with in China whom I met again as exiles in Turkey and Europe, that I began to think much more about the implications of relational alterity for what Rey Chow calls the diasporic condition, and its destabilizing challenge to the contemporary nation-state. I spent the 1992–93 academic year as a Fulbright Research Scholar in Istanbul following up on interviews I had in 1988 with refugees who had come there from China in the 1940s. This was after spending three years in China conducting fieldwork between 1982–1986 primarily among the people known as Hui, but with brief trips to Uyghur and Kazak areas in China during that time.

Since then, I have been back to China every year, visited Almaty on three occasions, most recently in June 1992, and attempted in each case to follow up on contacts with Hui, Uyghur, and Kazaks and their relatives I had met during the earlier period. Spending most of my time moving between the boundaries of nation-states among the peoples that cross them, rather than "squatting" (Geertz 1989: 23) in one "timeless, self-contained" village, neighborhood, town, or state (the preferred hierarchy of structural anthropologists) follows Richard Fox's maxim to "work in the present" (Fox 1991: 1) or Bhabha's call to work in the "interstices," across the boundaries by which the groups I am interested in most define themselves.

This chapter regards national identity not as a consequence of globalism nor as the opposite of a modernist, self-enlightened identity, but as the product of contemporary and historical social relations. Taking Islam in Asia as a case study, I argue that Muslim and other identities in places like China, Central Asia, and Turkey provide exam-

ples of constructed identifications that are entirely logical, indeed necessary, for survival in the contemporary nation-state system. Given the long history of interactions with powerful others and colonizing empires in Asia, a purely relativist or, at the other extreme, a dehistoricized essentialized position with regard to identity formation is particularly questionable. Both extremes ignore issues of power, hegemony, "internal" colonialism, and cultural economy that have long dominated the region.

It is in the articulation of the multiplicities of these identities in exile, engaging in the "borderline work of culture" (Bhabha 1994: 7), that they become salient. Through examining three peoples portrayed as, and who now speak of themselves as "nations" (but only one of whom recently acquired a nation-state, and only one other as yet lays claim to such a state), I want to suggest three styles of identifications that, to follow Stallybrass and White's (1986) formulation (in their richly written *The Politics and Poetics of Transgression*), pose fundamental transgressions of the contemporary nation-state, and intriguing challenges to it. These are discourses of diaspora, indigeneity, and transhumanity elaborated by the social groups now known as Hui (Dungan), Uyghur, and Kazak.

I argue that nationalism itself is not just an imagined idea, but represents certain styles of imagined representation, a mode of representation that contributes to a grammar of action now most often defined by interactions within or resistance to the nation-state. As Hobsbawm argues, "Nationalism is a political program ... Without this program, realized or not, 'nationalism' is a meaningless term" (Hobsbawm 1992: 4). Nationalism is not arbitrary, but neither is there any core content to it, no essential essence that is not shifted and redefined in internal and external, often dialogical, opposition, using powerful symbols that John Comaroff has accurately described as defined by "totemic" relationality (Comaroff 1987). And, as Duara notes in his chapter, all nationalisms and ethnicities are not necessarily by-products of or contained within the nation-state construction.

The spate of what might be termed "Soviet nostalgia" in *Foreign Affairs* and other policy manuals which complain of the reemergence of "tribalisms" in Afghanistan, Central Asia, and Eastern Europe now that the "peace-keeping" hand of the Soviets and the "repressive" religious oligarchy of the Taliban have been dismantled, is misplaced, if not dangerously wrong. These peoples had been profoundly different before their domination by the centralizing states of Soviet and Chinese Central Asia, and their multifaceted identities are anything but tribal. Those suggesting Islamic extremism as an explanatory panacea for recent events in these regions have equally failed to note that expressions of Turkic or Islamic solidarity are often only one aspect of these complex identities in certain circumstances. In fact, the outcome of the desiccation of post-Soviet Central Asia has been most profoundly disappointing to the pan-Turkists and pan-Islamicists who would wish to construct global, transnational movements along the lines of language, race, or religion. The welcome recent translation of Olivier Roy's (1994) *The Failure of Political Islam* demonstrates that for Afghanistan, as well as much of Central Asia, the "perception of Islam and Muslim societies as one timeless cultural system" does violence to both contemporary social movements sweeping these regions, as well as the nature of Islam itself. This chapter attempts to suggest why these pan-ideologies may be even less compelling in the "globalization" era than in the so-called preglobal period when they supposedly arose.

Representation and national identification

I argue that the representation of the “minority” in China and elsewhere reflects an objectivizing of a “majority” nationality discourse that parallels the valorization of gender and political hierarchies. This process reverses subject/object distinctions and suggests the following parallels: Minorities are to the majority as female is to male, as “Third” World is to First, and as subjectivized is to objectivized identity. The widespread definition and representation of the “minority” as exotic, colorful, and “primitive” homogenizes the undefined majority as united, monoethnic, and modern. The politics of representation in China reveal much about the state’s project constructing in often binary minority/majority terms an “imagined” national identity (Anderson 1991). Through reading the representation of minorities in China, this chapter suggests that we learn much, perhaps more, about the construction of the majority, known as the “Han nationality.”

Following the tragedy of the 1989 **Tiananmen massacre**, there have been an onslaught of scholarly publications attempting to define and redefine China’s “quest for a national identity” in various terms, including: Confucianism or neo-Confucianism (i.e., recent suggestions in the political economy literature that it is Confucian culture that has led to the rapid industrial successes of the East Asian economies of Japan and the “four little dragons”: Taiwan, South Korea, Hong Kong, and Singapore; see Ong’s chapter), language (the popular notion that those who speak and read Chinese are Chinese), Han Chinese sedentary agriculturalism (contrasted with “minority” nomadism, see Fei Xiaotong 1989), the geophysical space of the country occupied by the PRC (Zhongguo, the central kingdom centered in the territory of China, see Thierry 1989) or a biogenetic neoracist notion of pan-Chinese Yellowness (as Su Xiaokang’s 1989 television series *River Elegy* seems to suggest; see Dikötter’s chapter).

The relational nature of identity

By contrast, a burgeoning literature on the anthropology of the Self has argued for movement away from reified definitions of Self to emphases upon “multiplicity, contextuality, complexity, power, irony, and resistance” (Kondo 1990: 43). Similarly, studies of ethnicity and nationalism have begun to move away from either culturally or primordial-based formulations to the analysis of power relations, particularly in contemporary nation-states (Anderson 1991, Comaroff 1987, Hobsbawm 1991, Gladney 1991, Keyes 1981). The connection between the relationally-described identities of nationalism and gender was made most clearly in the conference volume *Nationalisms and Sexualities*. The authors convincingly argue that, “like gender—nationality is a relational term whose identity derives from its inherence in a system of differences” (Parker et. al. 1992: 5; compare also Caplan 1987: 10). As traced by the Italian scholar Guido Zernatto (cited in Greenfeld 1992: 4), the Latin *natio* originally meant foreigners united by place of origin who were not Roman citizens. Like the Greek *ethne*, it meant outsider, less civilized, but without the connotation of “heathen,” or religious minority, which followed the term “ethnic” into English. “Nation” took on the meaning of a “community of opinion” during the 12th century Church Council where “nations” represented elite ecclesiastical parties. Greenfeld (1992: 5) shows how the

term becomes transformed in a “zigzag pattern of semantic change” overtime to mean a “unique sovereign people,” and I will argue, this is not unlike how groups themselves become transformed from loose associations, into what might be called ethnic groups, to nations, and even nation-states.

Gladney on the tyranny of terminology

While I agree with the need to investigate the origins of Western discourses about identity, Greenfeld’s lexicographical history (Greenfeld 1992) and Thomas Eriksen’s descriptive taxonomies in the end prove unsatisfactory in that they fail to address the contemporary salience of ethnic nationalist discourse. Thomas Eriksen’s *Ethnicity & Nationalism: Anthropological Perspectives* (Eriksen 1993) tells us “what is ethnicity,” and “what identities do,” and in the end moves from the metaphor of the “melting pot” to the “stir-fry”—the vegetables are all still there and you add a little power or class conflict and get a slightly different mix.

Greenfeld’s helpful definition of the nation as “a unique sovereign people” captures both the ethnic (ascriptive) and national (descriptive and prescriptive) aspects, but does not show us how and why people can transgress these categories by moving among, within, and against them, or why they should have to in the first place. Neither encyclopedic attempt deals adequately with the power and increasing salience of identity formation depicted as ethnic and national, what Michael Fischer (Fischer 1986: 195) once described as its paradoxical “id-like” power, its “ambivalence,” its “multiplicity, contextuality, complexity, power, irony, and resistance” (Kondo 1989: 43).

In this chapter I seek to address this issue with regard to the shifting simultaneity of identity, constructed through relations of alterity, in the context of contemporary nation-states.

Several scholars have noted the colorful portrayal of minorities in China as derogatory, colonial, and useful to the state (Diamond 1988, Thierry 1989), but this extends to imperial times and is not particularly new (see Eberhard 1982). Studies of modern Chinese art have also drawn attention to the important place of minorities in the formation of art history of the PRC (Chang 1980, Laing 1988, Lufkin 1990). I would like to suggest that the objectified portrayal of minorities as exoticized, and even eroticized, is essential to the construction of the Han Chinese majority, the very formulation of the Chinese “nation” itself. In other words, the representation of the minorities in such colorful, romanticized fashion has more to do with constructing a majority discourse than it does with the minorities themselves. This minority/majority discourse then becomes pervasive throughout Chinese culture, art, and media. In her work *Woman and Chinese Modernity*, Rey Chow (Chow 1990: 21) also makes the important connection between ethnicity and the construction of Chinese womanhood, but Chow’s is an external argument about the Western construction of China as feminine, while I am linking internal constructions about the minority Other within Chinese society. I also extend the argument to popular culture in general, with a reference to the interesting continuance of this discourse in the film, *Ju Dou* by Zhang Yimou. Significantly, and here this study makes a contribution to those discussions that attempt to move beyond

Edward Said's Euro-centric "orientalist" critique, the representation of minorities and the majority in Chinese art, literature, and media will be shown to have surprising parallels to the now well-known portrayals of the "East" by Western orientalist. This "oriental orientalism," and the objectification of the minority Other and majority Self in China, will be shown to be a "derivative discourse," in Partha Chatterjee's (Chatterjee 1986:10) terms, stitched from Chinese, Western (namely Morganian and Marxist), and Japanese ideas of nationalism and modernity.

The centrality of "minorities"

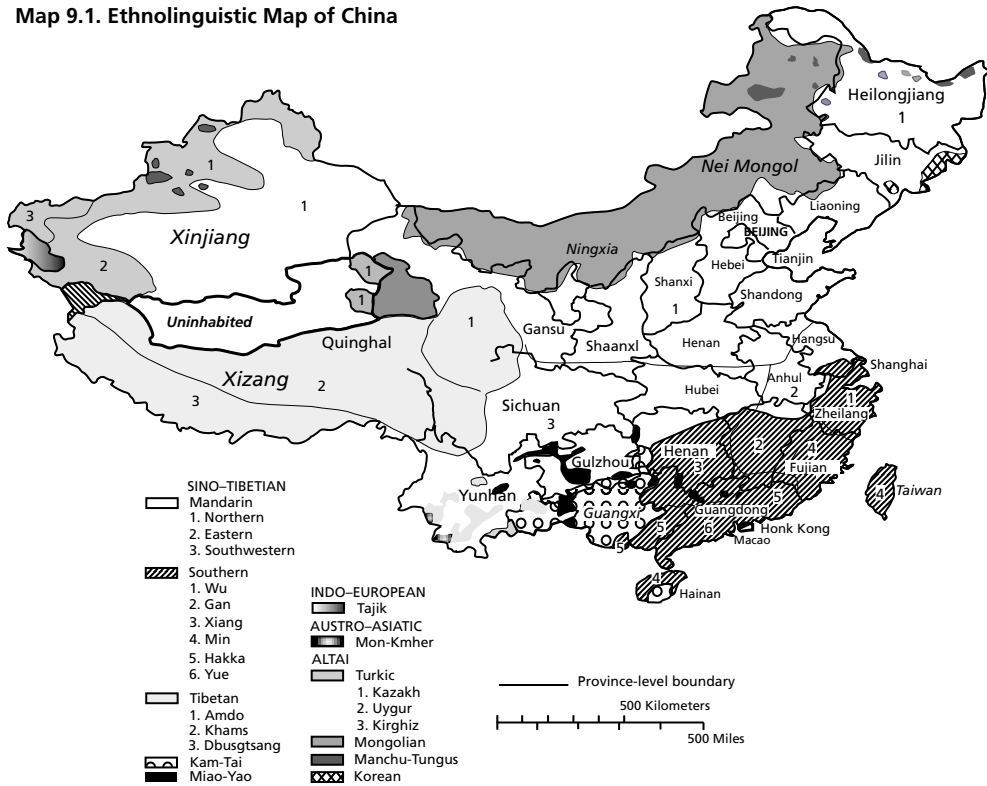
This approach rejects the traditional center-periphery construction of Chinese society, with the so-called "minorities" on the distant margins of Chinese society and nationality. It also challenges the dominant idea that Han Chinese "civilization" dominates discourses about minority identifications in China, or that anyone who came into China, foreigner, minority, or barbarian, was subject to "Sinicization" (Ch'en 1966). In these configurations, Chinese culture functioned simultaneously, to quote James Hevia, as both "sponge and eraser" of foreign cultures: China not only absorbed outsiders, it dissolved them, and the few that survived on the "periphery" were generally thought "uncivilized" or "marginal" to the understanding of Chinese society.

During my fieldwork I was often surprised to find that many of the reforms in China, whether they be in spheres related to the market economy, privatized agriculture, or religious and political freedom, were first allowed in minority areas, and these often directly influenced the nature and force of change among the Han (see Gladney 1990a). The popular valorization of "minority" culture in China (and in the West) through media, art, and commoditized ethnic tourism, suggest that there is more to it than the "barbarian-civilized" binary model seems to suggest. In this chapter I argue that even in the areas of popular culture, art, film, and moral value, the so-called "peripheral minorities" have played a pivotal role in influencing and constructing contemporary Chinese society and identity. I am addressing public culture in its often state-sponsored production and reproduction, concerning myself more with representations in nationally-distributed media and film, rather than a specific field site.

I also suggest that the commodification and objectification of minorities in China represents something more than a response to Western consumer tourism, providing the state and modern capitalists with not only hard currency, but also important symbolic capital, to use **Bourdieu's** construction (Bourdieu 1977: 6). The exoticization and representation of minorities is an enterprise that took on enhanced importance with the rise of the Chinese nation-state and is central to its nationalization and modernization project: The homogenization of the majority at the expense of the exoticization of the minority. The so-called minorities, long confined to the margins of Western and Chinese theoretical discourse on Chinese society, are no longer marginal, and perhaps never should have been, to our understanding of contemporary China.

The display and commodification of the minority Other in China

Map 9.1. Ethnolinguistic Map of China



One cannot be exposed to China without being confronted by its “colorful” minorities. They sing, they dance; they twirl, they whirl. Most of all, they smile, showing their happiness to be part of the motherland. The 4-hour Chinese New Year’s program is a yearly special broadcast throughout China to its 1.3 billion population. And, even though only 8 percent of that population is supposed to be minority (the Han majority occupy 91% of China’s population according to the 1990 census), fully one-half of the evening’s programming is devoted to smiling minority dancers. A brief examination of the opening minutes of the evening’s program immediately reveals the crucial role minority peoples play in the contemporary construction of the People’s Republic of China.

The program begins with a view of the clock tower on the Central Radio and Telegraph Building located on Chang An Avenue striking 8 o’clock, the time for the start of the show that lasts until midnight. It is the most popular program on television during New Year’s Eve, carried on the CCTV Central Broadcasting System that is received throughout China, including Tibet, Mongolia, and even Taiwan and Hong Kong. In my several years of fieldwork in China, I noted that most families from Beijing to Xinjiang on New Year’s Eve preferred to stay at home and watch this program surround-

ed by relatives and a few close friends. During the 1991 broadcast, I sat with Chinese friends in their apartment in Beijing, and was repeatedly told to sit and watch the program with the rest of the family, even though I preferred to catch up on the local gossip. After the clock shown on the television struck 8:00 p.m., the doors to the elaborate stage opened and revealed a wide array of colorfully dressed minorities advancing onto the stage.

After a brief introduction to the evening's program, four well-known television personality hosts wished the audience a "Happy New Year" and initiated the first choreographed program of the evening by stating: "China is a multinational country, 56 different nationalities, like 56 different flowers. The many nationalities wish to extend to all of you a Happy New Years through a special Tea and Wine Happy New Years Toast!" The program follows with first Tibetans, then Mongols, Zhuang, Uzbek, Korean, Wa, Hui, and other minority dancers presenting Buddhist "hata" (scarves), other minority gifts, and cups of tea and wine to the studio audience, singing their native songs in their native languages, with a Chinese translation superimposed on the television screens as subtitles.

Gladney on the TV-Hui

It is noteworthy that though the Hui do not possess their own separate language, and are known for eschewing the "songs and dances" by which many minorities are iconographically represented in China (see Gladney 1991: 21–30), in this program they sing and dance just like the rest of the performers. Instead of detailed lyrics from a traditional New Year's folk song (of which there are none), the Hui sing their traditional Arabic greeting, A'salam Alei Cum, over and over again. The Chinese subtitles translate this formulaic greeting as "*Pengyou Nihao*" (Friend, hello).

In striking resemblance to the tribute offerings of the ancient Chinese empires, the minorities, sing and perform ritualized prostrations as they offer their greetings to the studio audience, who appear to be largely members of the Han majority. They appear so, because the studio audience is uniformly (as if in uniforms) dressed in conservative suits with ties, Mao jackets, or other formal dark "Western" attire, which is in marked contrast to the "colorful costumes" of the minority entertainers. Nonminority entertainers and hosts exclusively wore Western-style suits and dresses. The rest of the 4 hours of programming has well over half of its programs been devoted to minority songs and dances.

56 nationalities

After the People's Republic of China was founded in 1949, the state embarked upon a monumental endeavor to identify and recognize as nationalities those who qualified among the hundreds of groups applying for national minority status. The question of one's nationality, which is registered on one's passport and all official documents, is determined by Stalinist and historical criteria that determine if one is a member of a

group that was ever linguistically, economically, geographically, or “culturally” distinct from the so-called Han majority population (see Fei 1981). This recognition may make a considerable difference in obtaining certain privileges accorded to minorities, in some cases including permission to have more than one child, obtaining entrance to university, having access to local political office, special economic assistance, and tax relief programs. Those who were recognized by the state are always portrayed in the state-sponsored media as happily accepting that objectivized identity, as the caption for a photograph of several minorities in traditional costume pictured in a 1990 brochure introducing the “Nationalities Cultural Palace” (Minzu Wenhua Gong) in Beijing reads: “The Happy People of Various Nationalities.” Significantly, Tiananmen, the Gate of Heavenly Peace, is bordered on both sides by the slogans: “Long Live the People’s Republic of the Chinese People” (*Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo wansui*) and “Working Peoples of the World, Unite!” (*Shijie renmin gongren tuanjie*). These state-sponsored signs on public buildings and in the media emphasize for the Chinese populace over and over again that China is a multiethnic and multinational state—a point that is critical to China’s representation of itself to itself, and to the international sphere. China regards itself as a multinational nation-state that must be reckoned with by other multinational, “modern” nation-states.

The myth of democratic representation

As multinational, China portrays itself as democratic, claiming “autonomous regions, prefectures, counties, and villages” based on the Soviet model, but in name only, since the Chinese constitution does not allow true geopolitical secession—something perhaps the conservative Russian right-wing now wish Stalin would have thought of when he approved a Soviet constitution that allowed for political secession of the (now former) republics. The myth of democratic representation is critical to China’s construction of itself as a modern multinational state, distinguishing and distancing itself from the ancient feudal Chinese empires that did not allow for representation. As Spivak argues, “One of the gifts of the logic of decolonization is parliamentary democracy” (Spivak 1990: 105). Given public criticism over China’s treatment of Tibet, it is not surprising that Tibetans are often represented as the most willing subjects of Chinese “democratic liberation.” In a 1985 issue of the state-sponsored *Nationalities Pictorial*, a Tibetan is portrayed as happily voting, as if they really did control their own destinies. The caption reads: “Happiness Ballot.” In another published painting in the same issue, several minorities are portrayed on the Great Wall, happily proclaiming in the caption: “I love the Great Wall”—though the Great Wall was primarily built to keep nomadic peoples out. It is also interesting to note that in this figure clearly geared for school children, the figures on the Great Wall, with one exception, are clearly Muslim: the men wear Turkic and Hui (Muslim Chinese) Islamic hats, and the woman is veiled. The oddman out strangely enough is an African. Perhaps he is represented on the wall with the other minorities to represent their ethnic solidarity; more seriously, perhaps it is to emphasize their corporate “primitivity” (i.e., promoting the idea that China’s minorities are like “primitive” Africans), which is key to understanding the position of the minorities in the Marxist–Maoist evolutionary scheme (see below).

Commodified minorities

The commodification of minorities is accomplished through the representing, packaging, and selling of their images, artworks, and “costumes” in the many pictorial-gazetteers, such as *Nationalities Unite (Minzu Tuanjie)* and *Nationality Pictorial (Minzu Huabao)*, as well as in museum displays, such as in the “Nationality Cultural Palace,” an enormous exhibition hall and conference center on Chang An Avenue which houses a store selling minority artifacts and costumes as well as temporary exhibitions regarding minority nationalities. It is bordered by the Nationality Hotel and offices of the State Commission for Nationality Affairs, the ministry charged with administering all dealings with minorities in China. In minority areas there are boutiques, open markets, tourist stores and even “cultural stations” (*wenhua zhan*, see Schein 1990) where minority goods are collected, displayed, sold, and modeled. Books and sets of photo cards published by the State introduce the 56 nationalities of China and are widely distributed to school children, foreign students, and tourists, and carried by officials on trips abroad as gifts to their host institutions. In baseball card fashion, the back of the card has each group’s statistics: summarizing the nationality’s distinctive history, language, and culture. The nationalities themselves are portrayed on the front by a “representative” iconographic image, generally a picture, of that group, colorful and usually female.

“Internal colonialism”

It is noteworthy that of the 56 nationalities introduced in the state-sponsored English language pictorial *Chinese Nationalities* (1989), only 3 minorities are represented in the first picture as males. All 53 others are represented by a beautiful, alluring minority young woman, in a colorful “native” costume. The minorities are almost always portrayed in natural, romantic settings, surrounded by fauna and flora. Significantly, however, the Han are represented in the same book by conservative, middle-aged women, in an urban setting, with what is generally thought to resemble “modern,” Western-coiffed hair, dressed in Western-style sweaters and modest pants and long-sleeve outfits. This displays what the authors perhaps considered to be their modernity, and by extension, their normality, civility, and subjectivity. The authors of *Chinese Nationalities* chose that photo to represent the Han, not one that bears any resemblance to a “traditional” Chinese society, even though the minorities are always shown in their “traditional” dress. Instead of being represented as singing and dancing, one photo has the Han women with single infants, in strollers. The caption reads: “It’s good to have only one child” (*Chinese Nationalities* 1989: 20). When minority men are portrayed, and then rarely, they are generally exoticized as strong and virile, practicing strange and humorous customs, or possessing extraordinary physical abilities in sport, work, or the capacity to consume large amounts of alcohol—much more than a typical Han (*Chinese Nationalities* 1989: 16). “To drink like a Mongol” is a compliment one often hears about one’s drinking ability in China.

The state, through commodifying and representing its minorities as colorful and exotic engages in a project familiar to the representation of colonized peoples by colonial regimes. By publishing an extraordinary collection of “orientalist” erotic postcards, the Algerian Malek Alloula examines French observations of Algeria, and

claims to be sending the postcards back “to its sender” (Alloula 1986: 5), unveiling the role of the “colonial harem” as both orientalizing the Other and subjectivizing the European Self. Through state-sponsored representation of the minority Other as exotic much the same is accomplished in China, only in the context of what Michael Hechter has termed “internal colonialism” (Hechter 1975).

Essentializing the Han

The representation of the Han as “normal” and “unexotic” is critical for understanding the construction of present-day Chinese identity. Just as Peter Worsley has shown that the discourse of First and Third Worlds helps to confirm the so-called First World’s superiority (see Worsley 1984), the subordination of nationalities in China leads to the clear promotion of the Han to the vanguard of the peoples of the People’s Republic. While research on the rise of Russian nationalism has been popular in Soviet studies since the 1970s, both by foreign and Russian scholars, as yet no larger studies of the creation of Han nationalism have emerged—perhaps because it is often assumed that “Han” is generally equal to “Chinese.” Few have questioned how the Han became the ninety-one percent majority of China. Yet in China, identity papers register one not as “Chinese” (Zhongguo ren), but as Han, Hui, Manchu, or one of 56 stipulated identities. In China, national identity is not only “imagined,” it is stamped on one’s passport.

Han modernity and the construction of primitivity

The Han are frequently represented as somewhere near the “modern” end of a Marxist historical trajectory upon which China’s minorities must journey. Much of this derives from a continued commitment in Chinese social science to the study of minorities as “living fossils” indicating the origins of “primitive communism.” Matrilineality, communal living, and property holding, and even extramarital sexuality among the minorities all become “proofs” of how far the Han have come. Chinese Marxist social science has been heavily influenced by stage evolutionary theory, particularly as represented in the writings of the American anthropologist Lewis Henry Morgan. In his

famous 1878 treatise, *Ancient Society*, Morgan described in his first chapter, entitled the “Ethnical Period,” the development of society from savagery, to barbarism, and then to civilization. Tong Enzheng, the Sichuanese anthropologist and museologist, was one of the earliest to

Tong Enzheng on Morgan’s stage theory: www.carleton.ca/~bgordon/Rice/papers/tong89.rtf

publicly criticize Chinese anthropology’s heavy reliance, almost reverence, for this theory of societal evolution.

In China, minority studies became an avenue for proving Morgan (and it was believed, Marxist thought in general) to be right, over and over again, through the examination of minorities as representatives of earlier forms of society, “living fossils” of savagery and barbarism. The Han, as representative of “higher” forms of civilization, were clearly more evolved, and were to lead the way for minorities to follow.

As if to underline the continued dominance of this theory, Fei Xiaotong, China's most revered social scientist, presented a 1988 Tanner lecture in Hong Kong, entitled "Plurality and Unity in the Configuration of the Chinese Nationality," which was latter published in the Beijing University Journal. In the chapter, Fei traced the rise of the Han people from multiethnic origins prior to the Qin dynasty, and their almost unilinear descent down to the present day, despite absorbing and being conquered by various foreign tribes and nations.

As soon as it came into being, the Han nationality became a nucleus of concentration. Its people radiated in all directions into the areas around it and, centripetally, absorbed them into their own groups and made them a part of themselves ... As the non-Han rulers' regimes were mostly short-lived, one minority conqueror was soon replaced by another, and eventually all were assimilated into the Han ... But as the national minorities generally are inferior to the Han in the level of culture and technology indispensable for the development of modern industry, they would find it difficult to undertake industrial projects in their own regions, their advantage of natural resources notwithstanding ... Therefore, our principle is for the better developed groups to help the underdeveloped ones by furnishing economic and cultural aids (Fei 1989: 39, 45, 47, 52, excerpts from Fei's article are taken from the English transcript of the Tanner lecture, which has not yet been published).

Fei Xiaotong's understanding of national identity and social development is based on a strong commitment to Stalinist–Leninist nationality policy, based on Morgan's theory of stage development evolutionism, and Engels' prediction of the withering away of class and national identity with the removal of private property. While there are many nationalities in China, the Han are defined to be in the cultural and technical vanguard, the manifest destiny of all the minorities. While many younger scholars, like Tong Enzheng, are beginning to challenge the dominance of the Marxist–Stalinist–Morganian paradigm, it still heavily influences the popular discourse regarding nationalism and Han superiority in China, as well as state policy.

"Amazing Marriage Customs"

The popularity of this discourse is evidenced by a recent film, *Amazing Marriage Customs*¹ (*Jingu Hunsu Qiguai*, literally "Strange modern and ancient marriage customs"), distributed by the Nanhai Film Company. Filmed entirely in China with government support, the film is a survey of marriage customs throughout China, with a heavy dose of minority practices, especially in Yunnan. What is noteworthy about the film is not the typical exoticization and eroticization of minorities as described below, but the deliberate structuring of the film along stage evolutionary theory. At the beginning of the film, we are shown primeval visions of a neolithic past and the emergence of primitive mankind. The narrator intones:

¹ Directed by Suen Wan and Guo Wuji, 1992.

Getting married is natural, but during long period [sic] in history, men had no idea of 'love' and 'marriage'. From the 'childhood' of human history, 3,000,000 BC to the end of matrilineal society in 5000 BC, marriage history transits from group marriage, polygamy, to monogamy stage [sic]. Each stage has its own development, traces of which could be found, only three decades ago in China ... From 3,000,000 BC to 1,000,000 BC human society began to form. There was nothing called marriage, or it was called primitive promiscuity [yuanshi luanhun de jieduan, lit., "stage of primitive confused marriage"]. From 1,000,000 BC to 100,000 BC human society divided into blood families [xueyuan jiazu]. Promiscuity existed, called consanguine group marriage. In matrilineal society, group marriage outside tribe [sic] started. In ancient society, nothing called marriage could be found in group marriage. The relationship was casual.

Other films on minority marriage customs

A similar film survey of minority marriage customs produced in Hong Kong by the Wah Ngai Film Production and King Video is entitled: *The Inside Story of the Great Southwestern Forbidden Borderlands* (*Da Xinan Jinjing Tanmi*, 1990). In this film, however, there is one incident where the Bai nationality in Yunnan is described as being so "hospitable" that the host offers his wife to the guest as a sexual partner. The "custom" is then enacted on film.

Y Na Woman of a Thousand Places (1992), a film by Yvette M. Torell, replicates this exoticized portrayal of Dai, Naxi, Bai, and Tibetan women in Yunnan and Tibet, complete with the now mandatory Thai bathing scene, in a well-worn, inaccurate representation of the "Naxi" matrilineality. For an excellent critique of this mistaken view see McKhann (1989). Torell's introduction invites the viewer to learn from their "matriarchy." It is noteworthy that these films, like minority representation in general in China, focus almost exclusively on women and sexual relations.

The film then presents a succession of minorities in various stages of transition from "matrilineality" to "patrilineality," including intimate scenes of marriage and mating rites among the Naxi, Dong, Bouyi, Yao, Hani, Wa (Va), Mosuo, Zhuang, and Miao (Hmong). Several of these groups are described as practicing "free love" and very "open to sex." In one scene, Dong women are shown bathing in the river, only barely covered by their triangular tops, and as the camera focuses on exposed breasts, the narrator states: "The (women) take a bath in the river after work, what a lovely scene. The scenery is beautiful enough, they make it more fascinating." In one particularly explicit bathing section featuring Miao (Hmong) women, the camera zooms in on a group of women disrobing completely in the river, and with long lens shots taken through the grass in a voyeuristic fashion, the narrator notes the arrival of several men:

They've asked their lovers to come. What for? To watch! A thorough examination indeed! If he's satisfied, must do something [sic], in a very polite way of course. He present her a red ribbon, in a serious manner. Very happy indeed! The ribbon is a token for engagement. With this token she is somebody's. How romantic!

Following the “matrilineal” section, the film introduces the Uyghur Turkic Muslims of Xinjiang. “Islam,” we are told, “respects patriarchy and husband right.” And “women are subordinate.” The final scene begins with views of the Tiananmen and Forbidden City and, against a background of Han couples dating in the park, the narrator states:

The characteristic of modern marriage is freedom, monogamy, and equality between sexes. The law of marriage stipulates ... No force on either side. Or a third party interfering! Love is most essential in modern marriage. Having love affairs [*tan lianai*, lit., “speaking about love relations”] is a prelude of marriage. In the countryside of Beijing you may observe this wonderful prelude.

The film then notes that in a “modern large” city it is often difficult to find a mate, and therefore computerized dating is featured as a “modern” solution for finding a mate. The film culminates with a grand mass wedding of 100 couples, dressed in formal Western attire, who were actually married at the Beijing Hotel as a result of successful computerized matchmaking. The narrator concludes: “Monogamy means equality between the sexes. This harmonious union of love, marriage, and sex life notes the result of evolution in history.” By the end of the film, the viewer is left with the distinct feeling that the minorities and “primitives” had more fun.

The “unmarked” nature of Han identity

The minorities play a very important role in China’s official vision of history, nationality, and development. Their “primitivity” contrasts with supposed Han “modernity.” Minorities become a marked category, characterized by sensuality, colorfulness, and exotic custom. This contrasts with the “unmarked” nature of Han identity. “Hanness” for the Chinese connotes civility and modernity, and this is perhaps why more “educated” minorities such as the Manchu and Koreans, are never exoticized as sensual or primitive. The Han, though they supposedly comprise 91.2 percent of China’s population, are rarely described or studied as Han per se, whereas whole research centers and colleges are devoted to the study and teaching of minorities in China. Anthropologists of Euro-American society have begun to note a similar process in the unmarked majority category of “whiteness.” Majorities, according to Virginia Dominguez’s revealing study of Louisiana Creole identity, become “White, by definition” (Dominguez 1986). It is only the so-called “ethnics” (a term in the Oxford English Dictionary that comes into the English idiom as denoting “heathen”), who are marked by “culture.” Majorities by extension, become denaturalized, homogenized, and essentialized as “same.” This is particularly true, it seems, of Asia, where large blocks of Chinese, Japanese, and Koreans are thought to be “homogeneous.”

Hobsbawm on the homogeneity of Asian states

Eric Hobsbawm repeats this widely accepted idea of Asian majority monoethnicity in his classic work, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780*. “...China, Korea, and Japan, which are indeed among the extremely rare examples of historic states composed of a population

that is ethnically almost or entirely homogeneous." Hobsbawm continues: "Thus of the (non-Arab) Asian states today, Japan and the two Koreas are 99% homogeneous, and 94% of the People's Republic of China are Han" (Hobsbawm 1990: 66, nt. 37).

In the West, it is "whiteness" that is beginning to be problematized in the effort to scrutinize and come to terms with minority/majority discourses. This has yet to be done with "Hanness" in China.

Deconstructing whiteness

Dominguez chronicles the "veritable explosion" of defenses of white Creole ancestry in New Orleans once increasing polarization of white/black racial categories called attention to their identification with "blacks" despite their physical appearance as "whites" (Dominguez 1986: 140 ff). For problematizing "whiteness," see also Frankenberg's excellent *White Women, Race Matters: The Social Construction of Whiteness* (Frankenberg 1993).

Exoticizing and eroticizing minorities in China

While minorities are no longer portrayed as barbarians in China, and many of the disparaging Chinese ideographs that formerly scripted their names with "dog" and "bug" radicals were changed in 1949, their portrayal in public media is not only much more "colorful" and "cultural" than the Han (thanks perhaps to Stalin, whose four criteria the Chinese State adopted for recognizing a people as a nationality included "culture"), but also much more sensual. One of the favorite themes is that of minority women, especially the Dai (Thai), Hani, and Li, bathing in the river.

Bathing in the river

The image of Dai (Thai) and other minority women bathing in the river has become a leitmotif for ethnic sensuality in China, and often appears in stylized images throughout China, particularly on large murals in restaurants and public spaces. School children are often encouraged to make wood-block prints of Thai bathers and other exotic representations of minorities. One of the most famous incidents regarding the public portrayal of minority nudes in China was that of the Beijing Capital Airport. Yuan Yunsheng returned from 16 years of exile in Manchuria to be assigned by the state to paint a mural at the Beijing airport² in 1979. He chose for his subject the Dai (Thai)

² For publication of photographs of Yuan Yunsheng's airport murals, see "Magnificent Paintings: The Murals of the Beijing International Airport," *China Pictorial*, 1980 (1), pp. 18–31; and Cohen 1987: 28–36.

people of Xishuangbanna, whom he portrayed in his “Water Festival, Song of Life” on the background of a floral jungle motif, working, dancing, and, of course, bathing. However, the bathing mural on one side of the room eventually proved too problematic, and it was covered up in March 1980. Although the mural was proudly displayed in many official Chinese publications from October 1979 to early 1980, minority cadres from Yunnan began to object that the bathing mural was simply too offensive for public display and denigrating to minorities (Lufkin 1990: 35). It had also been causing a disruption in the dining room where it was exhibited due to the crowds of people who went to view it.

While the nudes eventually proved so controversial that the mural was covered up, and I understand that it has since been uncovered, covered, and uncovered again, I would argue that as the murals were commissioned and approved in the first place—displayed for nearly half a year—this indicated that the nude and even erotic portrayal of minority women was officially sanctioned. Partly as a result of this popular image, many northern Chinese, like the friends of my taxi driver, have flocked to minority areas to voyeuristically gaze upon this minority “custom,” to the extent that there are now few minority women who continue to bathe this way in the more densely populated areas. From the statement of the driver at the start of the chapter, and the reported presence of “sex tours” to Yunnan and other minority areas, it can be argued Thai and other minority women in China have become at a popular level, in Camille Paglia’s terms (Paglia 1990: 40), the ultimate “sexual personae” for the “Eastern Eye” of the broader Han Chinese society.

Edwards on gender and nation

The racial configuration of the nation is intimately bound up with notions of women and gender. We can interpret eroticized and feminized visions of nationalities as compensating for the idea of (Han) women corrupted by modernity. There are many examples of the feminization of the exotic and pristine, a phenomenon that scholars have generally linked to Western imperialism. In French Indochinese literature, the sensual, feminized colony was contrasted by the corrupted, modernized, unfeminine European female.

On the other hand, 19th century evolutionary discourses (see Dikötter’s chapter) gave rise to the notion of the womb as a critical site of national and racial reproduction and of the woman as guardian of racial purity, as biological and cultural reproducers of the nation. (This occurred in the late 19th century, linked to declining birth rates, especially in France after the 1870 defeat in the Franco-Prussian war.) Women in France, Britain and elsewhere were urged in official propaganda and government policies to go and join their husbands overseas in “heathen” Asian lands and to save their race from the contamination of miscegenation by rescuing their husbands from the arms of Asian women.

This objectified minority woman exudes sexuality, the very opposite of the Nefer-titi-like portrayal of chaste, reserved, and bound women, which Paglia argues became the model for the Western woman, but has also come to denote “modernity” for Chinese women, similarly restrained in their “ritual bonds” (Paglia 1990: 71). While it may be argued whether the images of minority women bathers are actually “erotic” or

“sensual” in the eye of the beholder, they are clearly images that do not apply to Han women, who are generally represented as covered, conservative, and “civilized” in most state publications. Nudity is often idealized and romanticized in China as being natural, free, and divorced from the constraints and realities of “modern” life. Minorities become likely subjects for such romantic yearnings. Here the audience becomes an important issue, but as in any discussion of public culture this is difficult to assess. Suffice it to note that in official public arenas, such as airports, hotels, and government offices, images of naked Han women are rarely found. Representations of unveiled minority women are frequently found in the official public sphere.

Costumes versus clothes

In her perceptive article on the popular David Henry Hwang play, *M. Butterfly*, Garber stresses the importance of clothing in making the link between gender representation and transvestism (Garber 1992: 123). The link between clothing and nationality, in which minorities are generally dressed in “costumes,” while the majorities merely wear “clothes,” is clearly made in Chinese museums, popular culture, and film. The changing of clothes and the altering of a restricted Han Self is precisely the basis for the 1985 movie, *Sacrificed Youth* (*Qing qun ji*). In this film by the Beijing film studio’s woman director, Zhang Nuanxin, a young Han woman from Beijing is sent down during the Cultural Revolution to the Thai (Dai) minority region of Yunnan in Xishuangbanna, near the border of Burma and Thailand, where she is confronted by more “liberated” Thai female customs. She wishes that she could be as free, and in a moment of rebellious assertion and self-transformation, she exchanges her drab, blue worker’s clothes for a Thai Sarong, whereupon she is pronounced “beautiful” by her Thai hosts and girlfriends. This leads her further on the road to self-criticism and the cultural critique of repressed Han identity. In this instance of retailoring the nation, to borrow a phrase from Parker, et al., for Duoli, the Han woman, cross-dressing becomes a transnational political act (Parker, et al. 1992: 120).

In another scene of *Sacrificed Youth*, Thai women are shown in the classic cultural trope as freely bathing nude in the river—a rare bit of soft porn for a 1985 film in China. The protagonist of the film observes the Thai women swimming from a distance and wishes that she was not so inhibited by her Han mores that she did not feel she could join them without her swimsuit. “Later,” she declares, “I learned to swim like they did, and I never wore a swimsuit again.” The bathing scene is prefaced by an encounter between a group of Thai young working women and men, who stop to sing antiphonal sexually suggestive songs to each other. Here too, the sent-down Han observer declares: “I could not join them, which made me feel inhibited and culturally behind.” Admiration for minority sexual freedom and “natural” state of being, becomes the foil by which Han majority and state-supported values are criticized. Both scenes are introduced and concluded by long shots of verdant, rushing waterfalls, suggesting perhaps that it is the natural sphere, with its cleansing element of water, that transform what the state denigrates for Han as erotic and perhaps “pornographic” into what is natural and unfettered.

Pornography in China

Gladney on restrictions on pornography in China

Though prohibited as pornographic for the general populace, it is possible to view foreign films with sex and nude scenes in various elite universities and training institutes. In 1983, I viewed the uncensored version of "Kramer vs. Kramer"—considered very *huang* (pornographic)—at the Beijing Foreign Languages Institute with a group of Chinese English students, their spouses, friends, and several cadres of the university. Chinese colleagues frequently complained to me that literature and films regarded as pornographic and illegal for common people were readily available to elite government officials and their families. Explicit foreign films are also widely shown in the joint-venture hotels throughout China, and such access to these and other "Western" luxuries is one reason Chinese youth envy those who can obtain jobs there.

Here, I must make very clear, the difference between what is erotic and pornographic in China is defined by what the state regards as legal and illegal. The point here is not about eroticism in general, it is that in China representations of Han subjects classed by the state as pornographic would not be illegal, and thus only erotic, if the Hans were dressed as minorities. In China, "erotic" is generally glossed as *xing aide*, or that which influences or encourages sexual love; whereas "pornographic" is generally translated as *seqing*, or literally, "colorful sentiment," obliquely referring to the color yellow, which refers specifically to the pornographic press.

Pornography in any form is restricted in China as illegal. This includes any publication, foreign or domestic, that the state censors regard as morally inappropriate for its broader population. Foreign visitors in the past were regularly searched upon entry for magazines, books, and videos regarded as pornographic, and there are regular police raids upon a burgeoning black market industry of (literally) underground video parlors and markets for erotic literature.

Gladney on legalized "private video rooms"

Legalized "private video rooms" (*geti luxiang yuan*) are found in most cities and towns in China, showing films imported from Hong Kong, Taiwan, and the West, which are frequently monitored by the local police. They are also known to show slightly risqué or even "hardcore" erotic films late at night when the authorities are not around. Even in remote rural areas, where the police are fewer and farther between, these parlors are not unusual.

I recall late one night in May 1985 passing by one such parlor with a long line out front, whose ticket prices had been increased from 15 fen (cents) during the day to 5 yuan (Chinese dollars, equivalent then to slightly less than US \$2.00) due to what I was told to be the very "yellow" (*huang*, the Chinese euphemism for pornographic subject matter) nature of the Hong Kong film. This parlor was quite popular, even though it was located in a Muslim minority area, within the Hezhou Hui Autonomous Prefecture in Gansu.

While there has been a profusion of illicit pornographic material in the 1990s and it has become much more widely available in urban areas, it is still illegal and arrests may be made. In the mid-1980s a wide variety of magazines and books with sexually suggestive titles and scantily clothed men and women proliferated throughout the nation's bookstores and news stands. Particularly popular was the *jian mei* ("make, or establish, beauty") genre of athletic magazines and playing cards which portrayed mainly Han Chinese and foreigners lifting weights or posing in skimpy bathing suits. State censors prohibit depiction of total nudity and these publications were frequently reviewed and confiscated. Yet despite this severe restriction upon and preoccupation with the sale of nude representations of foreign and Han Chinese women, throughout China, in state-sponsored media as well as foreign and domestic tourist shops, images of nude minority women are publicly displayed, *National Geographic*-style, in various suggestive poses. Not only are nude representations of minorities displayed in galleries and public spaces like the Beijing Capital Airport (see below), but they are readily available for sale in hotel tourist boutiques and minority crafts shops, such as the Central Institute for Nationalities Minority Handicrafts Store and the Nationalities Cultural Palace.

Chinese erotic art and literature

Scholars of traditional China are quite familiar with the long and widespread tradition of erotic art and literature, which had little to do with minorities. In *Sex in China*, the Chinese "sexologist," Ruan Fangfu, notes that the earliest sex manuals came from China, where one could find the classic sexological text dated in 168 BC, *He Yin Yang Fang* ("Methods of Intercourse between Yin and Yang"), as well as the pre-Tang *Important Methods of the Jade Chamber*, *Book of the Mysterious Penetrating Master*, and other classical texts which now are found in comic book form through Taiwan and Southeast Asia, but are still restricted in China³ (Ruan 1991: 2). After surveying this abundant traditional literature, Ruan groups them in three categories: descriptions of the mystical benefits of sexual intercourse; the health benefits of intercourse if following certain theories and texts; and the inherent pleasurability of sex (Ruan 1991: 29). The Dutch Sinologist, Robert van Gulik, collected hundreds of Chinese erotic sex manuals that proliferated in the late Qing, and popular classics, like *Dream of Red Chambers* and *On the Water Margins*, are extremely explicit and rarely published in their unabridged forms.



Fig. 9.2. Ting Shao Kuang, *Silk Road*. In Ting Shao Kuang, 1990, 7.

³ Orville Schell offered a humorous portrayal of the burgeoning industry of sexually suggestive publications (Schell 1988), which led in part in 1989 to a widespread series of protests by Muslims offended by their depiction in a Chinese book, *Sexual Customs (Xing Fengsu)*. In response to what was termed China's "Salman Rushdie" incident, the State banned and burned the book, closed the publication house, and arrested the authors (see Gladney 1991: 1–15). Many of these publications have been strictly curtailed as "bourgeois liberalism" since 1989.

An Exhibition of Nude Art

Luoti Huaxiang Zhanlan, shown in 1988 at the Beijing Fine Art Museum, was the first since the founding of the People's Republic to specifically exhibit nudes. Although it also included many minority nudes, it was closed after less than two weeks, despite enormous ticket sales at more than ten times the normal price (5 yuan instead of 10 fen, equal to US \$2.00 instead of the normal US \$0.03).

The state justified the closing of the exhibition because it claimed that many of the female models had objected to the public exhibition of their nude portraits as immoral. The models' husbands publicly complained of being the brunt of others' jokes, and claimed that their wives were no longer safe from attack. The state apparently has never been worried about this problem where minority women models and their husbands were concerned.

The repression of Han sexuality

If erotic images and public portrayals of Han Chinese sexuality are an acknowledged aspect of everyday life in traditional China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Singapore, why have they been so absent, so repressed, in the China mainland since 1949? George Mosse's argument linking totalitarianism and sexuality might have some bearing here. Mosse argues that unlicensed sexuality represents a threat to totalizing states (Mosse 1985). If Foucault is correct that the "policing of sex" is an important component in maintaining the unmitigated power of the central state (Foucault 1980: 24), then China's repressive prudishness is perhaps the best example of this endeavor. The policing of sex tends to also roughly coincide with radical leftist authoritarian campaigns in China, e.g., the 1966–1976 Cultural Revolution, the 1984 Spiritual Pollution campaign, and the more recent post-Tiananmen 1989–90 Six Evils campaign, in which public sexuality, pornography, and prostitution were all condemned as "feudalist" and thought to be an insidious part of the "democratic" or liberal movements that led to the crackdowns. In July 1990, the Vice President of China's Supreme People's Court, Lin Zhu, issued a new decree that traffickers in prostitution and for pornography would be subject to the death penalty (*Sing Tao Daily*, 18 July 1990, cited in Ruan 1991: 180). China is one of the few non-Islamic nations where prostitutes, pimps, and purveyors of pornography are routinely rounded up, imprisoned, and even, perhaps, executed under the "hoodlum offenses" statute.

Gladney on the official crackdown on prostitution and pornography

Ruan reports that a crackdown on prostitution and pornography announced by Li Ruihuan in September 1989 netted 103 prostitutes in Beijing alone between November 25–December 15 (Ruan 1991: 83, citing a *People's Daily* 15 February 1990 article). The Vice Minister of the Public Security Bureau reported that by January 1990, there had been 35,000 separate cases prosecuted, involving 79,000 prostitutes and their customers. On 16 April 1993 Reuters reported a *Beijing Evening News* story that Wang Shuxiang was sentenced to

death by the Beijing Intermediate Court for selling pornography and illegally trading in publishing quotas.

The *New York Times* (Kristof, 13 February 1992: A7) reported the arrest of Pan Weiming, the 42-year-old former chief of propaganda in Shanghai, for his aim to "philander with women." A well-known prodemocracy advocate, the Chinese Public Security Bureau managed to arrest him and give him a 4-year sentence for soliciting a prostitute in Sichuan. Supporters argue it was a set-up, however, as the entrapment procedure involved videos in the hotel room and a long-term surveillance of his activities, with subsequent interrogation reportedly focusing more on his prodemocracy contacts than his well-known sexual dalliances. In a recent crackdown, the Sichuan Fine Arts Publishing House was closed down for printing obscene books, and two others were cited (*Turkish Daily News*, 22 April 1993: 2). The reporter noted: "Chinese authorities have a very broad definition of pornography that often includes just about any depiction of the human body that is not in a medical or scientific context."

Slightly explicit films such as Zhang Yimou's *Red Sorghum*, and more recent, *Ju Dou*, all proposed, approved, funded, and produced by the state during more liberal periods, are routinely banned once more radical political winds prevail. In other studies, Ardener (Ardener 1987: 114) and Mayer (Mayer 1975: 260) have shown how "prudery" serves to reinforce, and even invent, social hierarchies. In China, enforced prudishness and controlled fertility among the Han, as opposed to represented minority sensuality, serves the state's national project of emphasizing Han solidarity, civility, and modernity.

Sex becomes one of the most public of private contested political spaces in China. In a state that regularly monitors the monthly menses of its women workers, engages in Malthusian birth-planning programs, and strictly regulates the age at which one can marry (21 for women, 22 for men), it is not surprising that sexuality has become highly politicized. Elsewhere, I have discussed the role that liberated sexuality played in the Tiananmen Square student protest, particularly in the student's public attempt to wrest political control of their bodies away from the state (Gladney 1990c). Here, I am arguing that it is the repression and control of sexuality among the Han, and its open representation among the minorities, which demonstrate the important role eroticization of the engendered minority Other plays in the Han construction of Self.

The invention of the Yunnan School

In the early 1980s, several northern Han painters were assigned to southern China to paint minorities and other "appropriate" subjects, leading to what has since been called the "Yunnan School" (Yunnan huapai) of modern Chinese painting. The Yunnan School has been regarded as one of the first distinct "schools" to emerge in contemporary Chinese art and has had a tremendous influence on the current generation of artists in China. In the early 1980s, Jiang Tiefang, Ting Shao Kuang, and He Neng became known in China for challenging accepted norms of painting, particularly including nudes with accentuated breasts in brilliant colors. This led, according to Joan Lebold

Cohen, noted critic and dealer of Chinese art, to the founding of the “Yunnan School of Heavy Oil Painting in 1982” (Cohen 1988).

It is significant that Ting Shao Kuang, one of the most prominent and successful members of the “school” has stated repeatedly that there is no such organized “school,” rather his and others’ similar work represents a style of art that is new in its subject matter (mainly minorities), and style (use of heavy oil and bright colors in abstract forms). In a 11 July 1992 taped interview with Ting Shao Kuang by the Los Angeles Chinese television station, Channel 18, Ting stated: “There is no such thing as the Yunnan Art School. We are all different artists from China trying to revolutionize the repressed mainland Chinese painting through the use of minority subjects, sexuality, and heavy oil colors, in often Western-influenced styles.” It is revealing that Ting should now say this, since one of his well-known paintings is entitled “Dawn of the Yunnan Art School” (Ting 1990: 11), and he has become one of the wealthiest and most successful representatives of the Yunnan Art School style.

The “Yunnan School” may very well exist only in the West, where it has met with financial tremendous success. Joan Cohen, claiming that the school represents a “renaissance” in Chinese painting, suggests that the most significant event in the development of the Yunnan School was when He Neng, Jiang Tiefang, and Liu Shaohui were commissioned to produce paintings for a documentary film project, “featuring the costumes, habits and environment of the various minority peoples living in Yunnan” (Cohen 1988: 5). By traveling to the minority areas, Cohen explains, the northern Han artists found that they could express many of their artistic interests through the color and style of minority representation.

Liu Bingjiang’s “Nude,” shown at the Oil Painting Research Association Exhibition in Beijing 1979, is clearly a minority representation, indicative of early Yunnan School tendencies. On a colorful background, a dark-skinned female nude is realistically portrayed kneeling with her hands on the ground in a submissive posture, wearing nothing but her jewelry. Given the tapestry background, her jewelry, and most importantly, the posture, the painting is one of the earliest works in the Yunnan School style. According to Cohen, her kneeling position is not within the officially sanctioned “academic painting repertoire” and thus suggests to Cohen a “South Asian” influence (Cohen 1987:46). It is important to note that the bracelets she wears clearly resemble shackles and, combined with the posture, the painting evokes erotic subservience and submission.

Unlike abstract Han figure paintings, it has been and still is officially acceptable to vividly and realistically paint, exhibit, and sell minority nude artwork. In another example, Chen Zhangpeng’s oil of a nude is appropriately titled “Innocence.” Reflecting Western influence, especially Gauguin, Picasso, and even Andrew Wyeth, this painting situates the exoticized minority subject in both the past and the present. Joan Cohen’s caption explains: “Chen’s sketchy study of a nude kneeling next to a tiger expresses the ancient Chinese idea that the untrammelled nature of the wild creature is innocent. Likewise, primitive people, uncorrupted by civilization, are innocent, a concept similar to Rousseau’s romantic notion of the noble savage” (Cohen 1987: 65).

The “innocence” of minorities in China contrasts well with representations of Han Chinese women as the modern workers of the industrialized nation, who, Chairman Mao once declared, “hold up half the sky.” The notion that the minorities represent the

beautiful “noble savage,” unsullied by Chinese political machinations and the degradations of modern Chinese society is an important theme for China’s modern artists. It may very well represent a Gauguinesque romanticization of the “savage” in contrast to the modern alienation of Chinese urban life. It may also be viewed as a cultural critique, or rejection, of modern Han China; an accepted venue for criticizing the depersonalizing, totalitarian state.

In an interview with the Yunnan painter, Xiao Jiahe, a former student of Jiang Tiefang, and himself the son of an intermarriage between a Han and a Jingpo, he stated that the reason he liked to paint minorities was, “They are pure and beautiful. It makes me feel peaceful when I paint them.” When I asked him why seven of the ten paintings in his exhibition with such titles as *Ancient Girl*, *Tara’s Toilette*, *Summer Solstice*, *Blossoms*, *Morning Prayers*, and *Homage at the Spring*, portrayed minority women in kneeling, submissive poses, with voluptuous scantily-clothed figures, he said: “Because I like the human body, and I think this portrays the essence of female beauty. Its also difficult to capture an entire woman’s body in a small painting if she is standing” (personal interview, 30 July 1991). It is significant that in later conversations, Xiao Jiahe explained that once he came to the States, he was urged by American gallery owners and agents, particularly the Allen H. Fingerhut Group, who strongly promote most of the Yunnan Art School paintings (and published Cohen’s 1988 book on the “Yunnan School”), to increase his use of motifs and colors popularized by the Yunnan Art School, since it sold well in the U.S. “They told me to use more pastel, gold, and bright colors; to paint beautiful, large-breasted women in elongated form, and to use ‘ethnic’ clothing. I even included a lot of African clothing because of my interest in Africa. I tried to make my art look more erotic (*xing aide*) but not pornographic (*se qing*)” (personal interview, 30 July 1991). Though most of his artwork was popularly received, comments from viewers at one of his exhibits, critical of his representation of minority women, caused him to reevaluate the Yunnan Art School style. “I have since rejected the Yunnan Art School,” he told me in a later interview (29 February 1992), “they are only interested in making money, repeating the same old saleable paintings. It is too repetitious. It is not art. ... I refuse to jeopardize my artistic career just to make money.”

Exhibition comments on Xiao Jiahe’s works

included the following:

“Your work reminds me of Gustav Klimt’s gold period, Picasso’s colors after Cubism, Kokoschka’s hands, Miro’s organic shapes, Native American Indian women ...”

“An enthralling body of works, full of magical shapes and curves, flowing like everlasting rivers. A joy to see.”

“Talented, yes! Evocative, yes! But because your main subject in this exhibition is young, nubile women (one model?), I could see you having commercial success in advertising art.”

"I feel that the two best paintings were the one of the peasant and the weaver's daughter. You unquestionably have tremendous talent, however, what distinguishes these two over the others was the subject. The beautiful young woman in each painting offers no insights into the female human being. She is more object than an exploration of the subject ..."

(Hand-written comments from the July 5–30, 1991 exhibition, "Works by Chinese Artist Xiao Jiahe," Memorial Union, University of Wisconsin, Madison).

"Primitive art"

By objectifying minority women as colorful, exotic, and erotic, robbing them of their individuality, and subjectivity, these Chinese artists are engaging in an anthropological enterprise well established by Lewis Henry Morgan, Frantz Boas, and other early American Historicists who posited a "common psyche" shared by all primitives. Though Boas and later anthropologists stressed individual contributions to the construction of cultural artifacts, and through painstaking ethnographic work brought to light the individual contributions of many "primitive artists," his commitment to the notion of a common cultural determinism and psyche in artistic construction nevertheless contributed to the objectification of the minority Other. In his path-breaking 1927 study of Primitive Art, Boas revealingly wrote: "The same motive recurs over and over again in the tales of primitive people, so that a large mass of material collected from the same tribe is liable to be very monotonous, and after a certain point has been reached only new variants of old themes are obtained" (Boas 1927 [1955]: 330). It is precisely the repetitive nature of "primitive" art construed as generic, unsigned, and anonymous that makes it so attractive to the "modern" collector: since primitives are all similar in their artistic representations, their artwork and thought patterns homogenized by a uniform culture, why should one piece of art need a signature? According to Sally Price, it is their anonymity and timelessness that makes primitive art so attractive to the time-bound, modern individual: "In the Western understanding of things, a work originating outside of the Great Traditions must have been produced by an unnamed figure who represents his community and whose craftsmanship respects the dictates of its age-old traditions" (Price 1989: 56).

Significantly, the use of "traditional" minority art, colors, and styles may be said to have paved the way for the public reintroduction of the Han nude in China, but only in a very highly stylized, Picasso-like form. Western motifs, styles, and color, with minority subjects, become a thinly veiled means of challenging traditional Chinese artistic conventions. Han female nudes, when they are officially and publicly represented at all, are generally in highly stylized forms, often in the Picasso genre, as a famous oil, "Daughter of the Sea," by Jiang Tifang demonstrates. On a brochure featuring a print of Jiang's 1988 "Playing Water," there is an eroticized and Picassoesque portrayal of the Yunnan Thai water-festival, including black sensuous dancing figures, with large breasts and nipples accentuated in bright red colors. The backside of the promotional brochure reads:

Jiang Tifang is the most influential contemporary artist of the People's Republic of China. His "Yunnan School" represents the first new Chinese art movement in 700 years, and the rebirth of artistic traditions that have been repressed since the Ming Dynasty (Fingerhut Group Publishers, painting brochure, 1992).

A great success

The Picassoesque portrayal of Han women and the abstract representations of the minority women have become so popular now in the West that not only have Chinese artists like Jiang Tiefang, He Neng and Ting Shao Kuang become extraordinarily successful and wealthy, purchasing houses in Bel Air and Beverly Hills, but they have spawned a whole lucrative industry now sweeping the upscale art industry in China and abroad. After a visit to a Shanghai exhibition of his work in Spring 1992, Ting told me that he was literally mobbed by his fans. "If I had painted Han that way when I was in China before, they probably would have arrested me. Now I am a hero" (personal interview, 11 July 1992).

The Austin Galleries is a series of chic art dealerships with galleries in Chicago, Detroit, San Francisco, Carmel, and Laguna Beach. At the well-appointed Chicago gallery, I was attracted in November 1991 by the large Yunnan School painting of a minority dancer prominently displayed in the glass case fronting onto Michigan Avenue. Not only were there several Yunnan School-style paintings by a Han Chinese immigrant, Wu Jian, but there were similar versions by a certain artist, Wong Shue, who turned out to be originally from Jamaica. The gallery consultant, Bella Cipkin, explained that the genre is the most popular selling artwork in the gallery, with large paintings selling for \$8–10,000, and many artists are beginning to copy the flowing, colorful style. She stated that it was the most popular art form to come along in years and sold the fastest in all seven of the Austin Galleries. Cipkin noted: "The mauve colors and liberating minority art in its breathtaking sensuality goes well with the furnishings in professional's homes." She also went on to suggest that one of the reasons the art might be becoming more popular in the U.S. was because it represented minority art: "What with the problems in Tibet and all, Americans want to support the ethnic people in China all they can." It is important to note here, of course, that very little of the Yunnan School art is produced by minorities themselves.

Marginalizing the center of Chinese film

"Minorities film" has followed oil painting in reforming the accepted norms of Chinese taste. Paul Clark (1987a: 20), noted critic of Chinese film, argues that it is the "propensity of minorities film to explore normally avoided subjects" that made them so successful and influential. In a 1988 Channel Four documentary on "New Chinese Cinema," Wu Tianming, the director of the now famous Xi'an Film Studio, where many of the influential "fifth generation" filmmakers were working (including Zhang Yimou, Tian Zhuangzhuang, and Chen Kaige), quoted a Chinese proverb: "When there's no tiger on the mountain, the monkey is king," indicating that it is distance from the centers of power such as Beijing and Shanghai which allowed his studio the

freedom for exploration. In the Channel Four documentary, the young director of the new, more realistic minority films, *On the Hunting Ground* (1985) and *Horsethief* (1986), Tian Zhuangzhuang, explained why he chose to film in minority areas:

I had several reasons. For one, Beijing Film Studios wouldn't let us direct when we were assigned there ... On the Hunting Ground and Horsethief may deal with regional minorities [lit: minority nationalities], but they're actually about the fate of the whole Chinese nation.

According to Paul Clark in his analysis of Chinese cinema, it is the search for a "national style" (*minzu fengge*) that was lacking among the Han which director's found among minorities. "Paradoxically, one of the most effective ways to make films with 'Chinese' style was to go to the most 'foreign' cultural areas in the nation" (Clark 1987b: 101). The search for a national identity in China apparently became more readily understood in opposition and contrast to minority cultures thought to be more vibrant and easily objectified than that of the amorphous, invented Han Chinese self. Through the representation of minorities as sensual, liberated, and colorful, Chinese filmmakers and artists found a "metaphorical resource" (James Hevia, personal communication): They were able to introduce taboo and often illegal art into the Chinese cultural mainstream. These artistic motifs then eventually influenced the broader Han majority-accepted cultural repertoire of artistic convention, leading to the establishment of a "national" style and identity.

Defining the Han through "minorities film"

Through the national medium of officially approved film, Han national identity becomes clearly objectified. In Zhang Nuanxin's *Sacrificed Youth*⁴ there are two scenes where there is an explicit rejection of sensual involvement by the female protagonist, precisely because she is a "Han." In the first instance, Duoli, the Beijing Han youth sent down to the countryside, is being cajoled while gathering firewood in the forest by her Thai coworkers about a ride in an oxcart she received home from another Beijing male whom she had met in the market place. When she protests that there is nothing between them, her Thai coworkers chide, "Don't be afraid to tell us!" She replies: "We are Hans, you know, we don't start love affairs that young" (literal translation: "We are Han people, we don't talk about love that early").

In the second instance, she is sitting alone with the very same Han youth late at night in the dark, romantic forest, listening to the enchanting music of a distant Thai celebration.

⁴ It is noteworthy that in the book upon which this film was based, the protagonist is sent to the rural countryside in a nonminority area, and the issues have less to do with dress and sensuality than with an affirmation of the naturalism of peasant life to which the Han woman must become accustomed. *Sacrificed Youth* relocates the episode to a minority area, where Han/minority issues come to the fore, further dramatizing the conservative repressiveness of dominant Han Chinese culture.

Duoli: What are they singing?

Male friend: Can't you tell? "My lover's hands are tender and fair."

Duoli: Don't they find it embarrassing?

M: Why should they? Isn't it better to speak out one's feelings? Unlike we Hans, always beating around the bush.

D: Speak out yourself then, no one tries to stop you.

M: But can you?

D: Why not?

M: OK. What's on your mind now?

D: I ... I find ... it's getting cold. Let's go home.

M: Is that all?

D: Yes.

M: [while gazing at her in her sarong]. You are a Han from head to toe.

[Literal: No matter what you say, you still are a Han].

In an interview with Zhang Nuanxin, the female director of *Sacrificed Youth*, published in *Camera Obscura*, Zhang states that she made the film in order to encourage the expression of Han female subjectivity and beauty:

After I read the original short story by Zhang Manling, I felt there were many things in it that I'd experienced myself. I'd been down in the countryside, too. I'd felt that the older and less attractive clothes were, (sic) the better. When we were very young, we couldn't make ourselves attractive, nor could we express love (Berry 1988: 21).

Internal orientalism

Indeed, it is the need for self-discovery, awareness, and expression that Chris Berry (1991: 6) has argued pervades much of "Women's Cinema" in China. Yet it is only by going to minority areas and contrasting the repressed, bounded Han female self to the constructed minority Other as unrestrained and beautiful that these goals can be explored on the screen. This goes against Julia Kristeva's utopian construction of the position of women in Confucianized Chinese society, and though it is framed as a Western critique, I agree with Rey Chow that it nevertheless idealizes the position of women in China to an inexcusable degree.

There are important parallels here to the *National Geographic* tradition of the sexual portrayal of the Other for a conservative readership which generally regards such portrayals of its "own" as pornographic. (For an excellent deconstruction of the eroticized, exoticized image of the "primitive" in *National Geographic*, see Lutz and Collins 1993.)

Clearly, in both cases there is a hierarchy of self: voyeurism of the Other is permissible when they are regarded as less familiar, less civilized, than one's own. As the Chinese film critic Paul Clark has argued in an *East-West Film Journal* article, "Ethnic minorities in Chinese Films: Cinema and the Exotic," film in China from the beginning was regarded as a foreign medium, a venue for viewing the exotic and strange. When China became closed to the outside world after 1949, minorities for the first

time took the place of foreigners as subjects of the exotic. As Clark (1987a: 15–16) explains: “Film audiences could travel to ‘foreign’ lands without crossing the nation’s borders.”

But I would go farther than Clark’s emphasis on fascination with the exotic. In China there is more to it than the typical *National Geographic*-style romanticization of the primitive, which one might argue is found in almost any society. Here, the state is intimately tied to, in control of, and provides funding for the politicized process of portraying the Other. In Said’s terms (Said 1978), the state has turned its gaze upon the internal other, engaging in a formalized, commodified oriental orientalism that may be focused on the minorities but represents a long tradition of fascination with the outsider in Chinese society. (Louisa Schein 1990, in a provocative analysis, uses the notion of “internal orientalism,” to describe this project. In China this fascination with the exotic has extended not only to the minority nationalities, but to representations of foreigners as well.) The real issue here is why the state should choose to explicitly support such an enterprise. I argue that the politics of this representation of minority Other is both an extension of power-relation practices in the traditional Chinese state, as well as a product of China’s rise as a nation-state.

Contesting and coopting otherness: eroticizing (even) the Muslims

While minorities appear to have had little choice in the way they have been exoticized in the media, and Han must also conform to their de-exoticized essentialization, there have been several attempts at contesting that restricted space. Not only did the student democracy movement emphasize the sensual, the unique, and the individual, but recent films such as *River Elegy* (*He Shang*), *Sacrificed Youth*, *Red Sorghum*, and *Ju Dou* all represent various popular levels of contestation (see Wang 1989: 32). Minorities have also attempted to voice their objections. The covering up of the nude bathing portion of Yuan Yunsheng’s Beijing Capital Airport painting was partly due to complaints from Yunnan minority cadres. (I was recently told that Yuan Yunsheng’s mural was uncovered in 1990, and has now been restored to its original eroticized form. Given the post-1989 political climate in Beijing, this may reflect another attempt to repress difference among the majority by emphasizing the erotic, exotic ways of the minority.)

In Urumqi, Xinjiang, a large group of Uyghur Muslim artists rallied in protest in 1987 over an exhibition at the Overseas Chinese Hotel of portrayals of Uyghurs and other Central Asians by Han artists that they claimed denigrated them as either too humorous or sensual. Paintings primarily by Han artists portrayed the Uyghurs singing, dancing, riding donkeys, and balancing watermelons on their heads. Worse yet, many paintings portrayed Uyghur women in revealing skirts engaged in erotic dances, such as Ting Shao Kuang’s “Silk Road,” which portrays a bare-breasted minority woman on a background of deserts and camel caravans. For many Uyghur, these representations are particularly offensive, as they regard themselves as conservative Muslims.

While one might be prepared to allow for the fact that southwestern minorities may have more “open” sexual practices than the Han in China today, they are not the only minorities portrayed as sensual and erotic. While the Thai women did traditionally

bathe in the nude (though many may fear to now), and the Mosuo as a matrilineal society may very well have allowed extramarital sexual practice at the matrilocal residence, the Uyghurs and other Muslim peoples can hardly be said to be more publicly erotic or sensual than the Han in their traditional culture (see Gladney 1990b). Uyghur women are widely known throughout China to traditionally cover themselves with purdah-like headscarves and wraps that envelope their entire faces and hair. Unlike the Middle East purdah where eyes and sometimes faces are exposed, Uyghur veils cover the entire face. As Muslims, they are generally much more conservative than Han Chinese in the public sexual sphere. Despite their protestations, these representations continue, underscoring the extraordinary contrast between the Han and minority spectacle in China.

Like many tourist hotels, the Sheng Tang ("Ascendant Tang") Hotel in northeast Beijing has a tile mural of a Tang dynasty minority dancer, with accentuated nude breasts, in the center of its main dining hall. On the opposite walls, erotic stylized murals from the Dunhuang Buddhist grottoes grace the dining room. Like in many public places in China, the sensual "Flying Absarases" are an officially sanctioned art subject (Cohen 1987: 17–20). I once asked a group of Han scholars viewing this mural if they thought the dancers were minorities or Han, and they all said minorities, even though the theme is from the Buddhist caves of Dunhuang, supposedly the cradle of Chinese Buddhist religious tradition. While Buddhism became transformed into a "Chinese" religion, its sensual representations in art and absarases have apparently retained the attributes of foreigners and minorities, not Han.

In the Chinese tourist pictorial, *A Picture Album of Turpan Landscape and Custom* (1985: 16), a Han artist, Gu Shengyue, portrays the sensual images of the Dunhuang caves, with floating female absarases and their accentuated breasts, hovering above him, almost as if to say: "Though these Uyghur claim to be Muslim, we know what they are really thinking about when they sing and dance." They have become yet another landscape in the national repertoire of China. In another portrait from the same pictorial, erotic Buddhist figures are portrayed hovering above ecstatic Uyghur dancers (Picture Album 1985: 18). Central Asian dance and artistic display come to represent a metaphor of sensuality and eroticism for Han China, even though Muslims now dominate the region.

Extremely realistic is the figure painting "Nude with Apples," by Tang Muli (in Cohen 1987: 101), a Han artist who has traveled widely abroad. With a Central Asian hat, sitting upon a Xinjiang carpet, and eating apples, often produced in China's dry, cold northwest, the Realist painting of a complete frontal nude is clearly meant to portray a Central Asian minority, though the model may very well be Han. Perhaps Tang Muli knew that a Han woman could never be portrayed so vividly and realistically. Yet, this is despite the fact that Muslims are the most conservative of all peoples in China.

The last painting of eroticized Muslims I will note is also the most startling: Zhao Yixiong's 1979 oil, "Awakening of Tarim." Of this controversial painting, Cohen (1987: 54) writes: "Tarim symbolizes the beginnings of modernization on the edges of the great Takla Makan, China's most terrible desert. She awakens on a vibrant patchwork of Silk Road images: camels, mosques, oil derricks, Buddhist deities, oases, grapes, gourds, and pomegranates." While paintings of Uyghur and other Muslims by

Han artists such as Huang Zhou have had a long history in China, they were never so eroticized as Zhao Yixiong's. His painting makes clear the dramatic linkage between nationality, women, and modernity: By depicting his nude Uyghur female subject as "awakening" from the midst of her traditional life to a "modern" world filled with oil rigs, airplanes, and nuclear installations, Zhao Yixiong perhaps suggests that it is only in throwing off the traditional minority culture of Islam, with its covered women, mosques, and caravans, that the Tarim woman and the region can be modernized. With camel caravans and mosque minaret literally emerging from between her thighs, this painting would, of course, be extremely offensive to Uyghurs. Nevertheless, it was commissioned to be painted by Zhao Yixiong, who, as a painter for the Chinese Museum of Chinese History and Revolution, is employed by the state to represent the Other in strikingly similar Orientalist fashion as that of Alloula's (1986) "Colonial Harem."

Cohen informs us that Zhao's painting was not allowed to be exhibited by the Chinese authorities. One might assume this was due to its explicit, erotic nature. Yet, according to Cohen (1987: 54), "The [Oil Painting Research Association] excluded it



Fig. 9.3. Zhao Yixiong, *Awakening of Tarim*, in Cohen, 1987, 54.

because of the green streak on the woman's buttocks—an Expressionist gesture that was apparently thought to be offensive." Extraordinarily, expressionistic representation was rejected as proper for minority portraiture, favoring explicit realism. By contrast, realistic representation of the Han female body has been heavily restricted by the Chinese State. Just as the subordination of Chinese women reifies the elevated position of men, so the exoticization of minorities essentializes the imagined identity of the Han and reaffirms Han feelings of superiority. Public, state-sponsored minority representation as both more sensual and more primitive than the Han supports the state's agenda: With the proper educational and economic progress they will eventually

attain the modernity that the Han have attained, and enter into the same civilized restrictions under the authority of the state as vanguard. Symbolic tribute by minorities becomes an important link with China's past, establishing their own feudal pasts, and a signal of who will lead the future. It also legitimates the state's authority to enforce homogeneity, morality, and "civility" among the nearly 92 percent Han majority, while difference is "temporarily" tolerated among the "backward" minorities. In a socialist society that claims to be post-Confucian, gender and ethnic hierarchies continue to be articulated in a discourse of morality—the proper ordering of the social universe. It is precisely resistance to that order which makes the film *Ju Dou* so controversial. But the question becomes, how do certain groups get represented in certain ways, and how do they then begin to conceive of themselves along those stereotypical lines? Three examples of Muslim groups in China and Central Asia will serve to illustrate the role of relational alterity in constructing stereotypical representations that contribute to the imagined and, often, very real identifications recognized by state censuses and nascent nationalist groups.

The Muslim Chinese: making identity

Embedded within the ethnoscape of China and Inner Asia, the Muslim Chinese, known as Dungan in Xinjiang and much of Central Asia, and as Hui in China, are distributed widely. According to the official nationality census and literature in China, the Hui people are the second most populous of China's fifty-five recognized minority nationalities, who altogether comprise almost eight percent of the total population. The Hui are the most widespread minority, inhabiting every region, province, city, and over ninety-seven percent of the nation's counties. It is noteworthy that while the Hui may represent a small fragment of the population in most areas (with the exception of Ningxia), they often make up the vast majority of the minority population in Han-dominated areas. This is also true for most of China's cities where the Hui are the main urban ethnic group. It is conventionally thought that China's Muslim minorities are concentrated in the northwest corner, near Soviet Central Asia. Surprisingly, after Ningxia and Gansu, the third largest population of Hui is found in Henan Province, in central China. Their sixth largest concentration is in Yunnan, and there are over 200,000 of them in Beijing, the nation's capital.

There is also extensive economic and occupational diversity found among the Hui, from cadres to clergy, rice farmers to factory workers, schoolteachers to camel drivers, and poets to politicians. In the north, the majority of Hui are wheat and dry rice agriculturists, while in the south, they are primarily engaged in wet-rice cultivation and aquaculture. Since the collectivization campaigns of the 1950s, most Hui were prevented from engaging in the small private businesses that were their traditional specializations. Hui run successful restaurants throughout China, and across its borders, which I have visited in Thailand, Bishkek, Almaty, Istanbul, and even Los Angeles, where there are six.

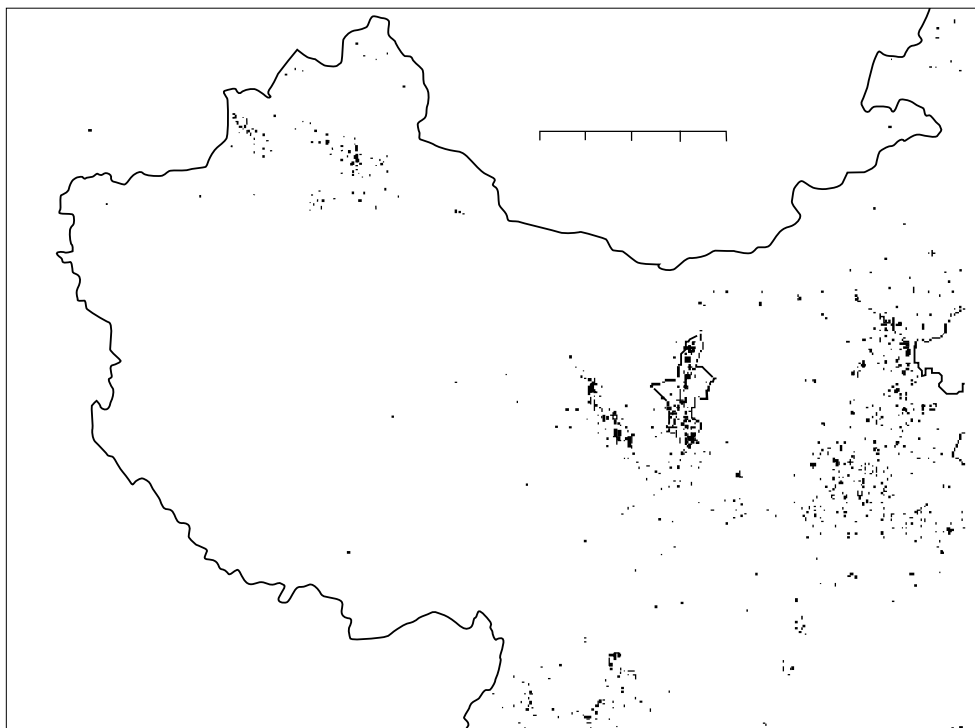
The Hui: a Han construct?

The people now known as the Hui from the beginning have been the diaspora, the immigrant in China, often "racialized" as the other. In China, "Race ... would create nationhood," according to Dikötter's (1992: 71) cogently argued thesis, and it had much to do with Han Chinese representations of Hui otherness. Even their name, "Hui" in Chinese can mean "to return," as if they were never at home in China and destined to leave.

Descended from Persian, Arab, Mongolian, and Turkish Muslim merchants, soldiers and officials who settled in China from the 7th to 14th centuries and intermarried with Han women, largely living in isolated communities, the only thing that some but not all had in common was a belief in Islam. Until the 1950s in China, Islam was simply known as the "Hui religion" (*Hui jiao*)—believers in Islam were Huijiao believers. Until then, any person who was a believer in Islam was a "Hui religion disciple" (*Huijiao tu*).

Nevertheless, they are recognized by the state as one nationality, the Hui, and they themselves now use that self-designation in conversations with other Hui and non-Hui. Like their unique Islamic architecture and art, Hui combine often, as they say, "Chinese characteristics on the outside, and Islamic ones on the inside," with mosques appear-

Map 9.2. Distribution of the Hui in China



Each dot represents 3,000 Hui Muslims

Outlined area at center represents the Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region

Source: Gladney, *Muslim Chinese*, 1991, ii.

ing like Buddhist temples on the outside yet embellished internally with Quranic passages. In a painting of the Chinese term for “longevity” (*shou*) popular with many Hui and mass-produced by the China Islamic Society for public profit, Quranic suras are written so as to form the very Chinese ideograph for “longevity” itself, beautifully illustrating the dual nature of the Muslim Chinese. This ambiguity, both Chinese and Muslim, resident stranger, is critical to their self- and other-representation.

As Hobsbawm (1990: 70–71) surprisingly predicted: “No doubt Bosnian and Chinese Muslims will eventually consider themselves a nationality, since their governments treat them as one.”

Relational alterity and oppositional identities: the Hui

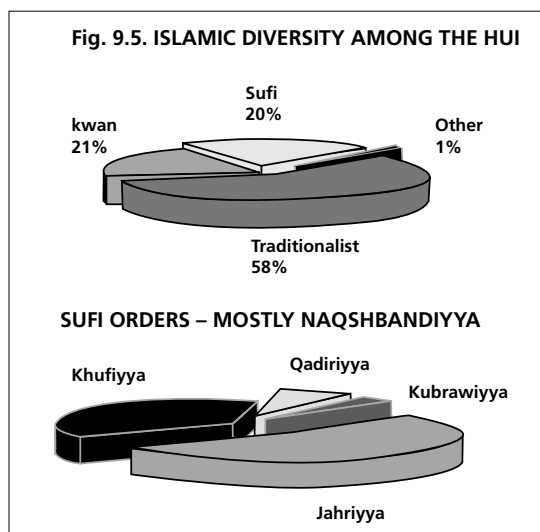
One way of conceptualizing contemporary Hui Muslim discourses of identity in China, Central Asia, and even Turkey, is to envision an identity that is both relational, relative, and grounded in a historical representation in which the people who have come to be known as the Hui situate themselves. I propose that it might be best understood through the notion of relational alterity, loosely abstracted from anthropological descent



Fig. 9.4. Oxen Street Mosque, Beijing

theory. Though in an entirely different territorial and economic context, Evans-Pritchard's (1940) classic study of the Nuer first suggested the expansive–contractive character of hierarchical segmentary lineage style among acephalous nomadic societies. When the Nuer (or Dinka) were confronted with an outside power, they unified and organized to a higher degree of political complexity in order to respond to the perceived challenge. When the threat subsided, they diversified and atomized, in an articulated pattern of what Gregory Bateson (1972: 96) once described as nested hierarchy. For as Bateson (1972: 78) argued, it takes two somethings to make a difference; without an other, you only have “the sound of one hand clapping.” While Evans-Pritchard's study was mired in the nineteenth-century colonialist structuralisms that portrayed “tribal” pastoralists as premodern and overdetermined by tradition, his model of alterity is surprisingly relevant to the postmodern, post-Cold War period, where it could be argued that the world is becoming increasing acephalous and breaking down into smaller and smaller relational units. These relations, like Evans-Prichard's Nuer, are segmentary in principle, taking as their basic components not the face-to-face herding units, but the imagined community of the nation, and its constituent parts.

This approach can be roughly diagrammed for heuristic purposes as an articulating hierarchy of relational alterities, a schematic that segmental kinship theorists have been playing with for some time. For example, when “A” and “B” encounter a higher level of opposition “D,” they form “C,” moving a node up the scale to form higher-level relations, or conversely, down the scale when the higher-level threat subsides. While this scheme is binary, it is always constructed in a field of social relations, and is inherently ternary in that A and B are always in union or opposition depending on their interaction with D. As David Maybury-Lewis and Uri Almagor once argued, it is the attraction (or repulsion) of “perceived” opposites that is key, there is nothing critical to binariness beyond that perceptual act (Maybury-Lewis and Almagor 1989). Indeed, there is nothing that prevents three groups from becoming a fourth in actual social relations, though it is difficult to portray in two-dimensional diagrams. Also, it is important that these alliances, relations, and oppositions are based on my own observations and reading of social histories; it is not a cognitive map, and the only constraints are those imposed by the specific contexts of alterity.



As I have argued elsewhere, these alterior relations are best perceived as “dialogical” rather than “dialectical” (Gladney 1991: 76–78), insofar as strict dialectics (Hegelian vs. Maoist) are generally thought to move in a certain direction, always negating a past relation, rather than dialogic interaction that can move back and forth, up and down, depending on the nature of the interaction.

Taussig on mimesis

As Taussig notes, identity is constantly constructed in imitation of and resistance to an often imagined “other,” creating samenesses and differences in mimeotic interaction: “... mimesis registers both sameness and difference, of being like, and of being Other. Creating stability from this instability is no small task, yet all identity formation is engaged in this habitually bracing activity in which the issue is not so much staying the same, but maintaining sameness through alterity” (Taussig 1993: 27).

Here we are merely tracing a “chain of stereotypical representation” (Bhabha 1994: 251), and seeking to outline in rather static terms constantly shifting relations and multiplicities of perceived identities that mask many levels of social simultaneity.

Gladney on relationality and relativity

Eriksen (1993) is correct to stress relationality and relativity in ethnic identification. The problem is that he neglects to place stress upon the context of the perception of difference, assuming it almost always to pertain. For Eriksen, everyone is ethnic, whether they like it or not. “Virtually every human being belongs to an ethnic group,” Eriksen (1993: 11) decides for us, “whether he or she lives in Europe, Melanesia, or Central America.” This

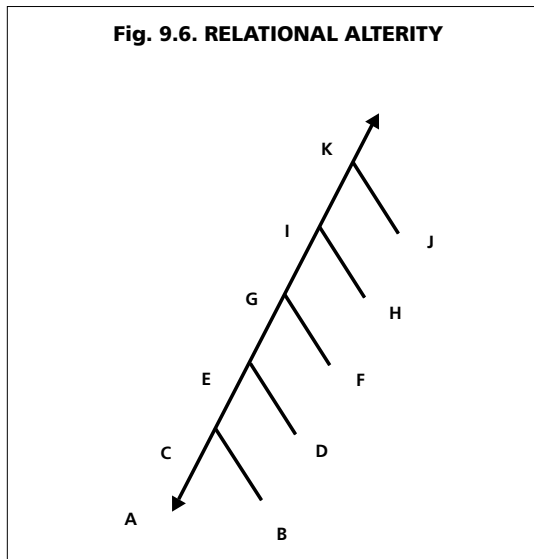
ignores the relevance and irrelevance of ethnicity, its historicity, and why, say, majorities (such as the “whites” in my Introductory Anthropology class, or the “majority” Han in China, or dominant Turks in Turkey) have a hard time thinking of themselves as “ethnic.”

As Rachel Moore observes, these fluctuating alterities can become so stereotypically fixed and represented that essentializing regimes, elites, and anthropologists often engage in “marketing alterities” for remarkably different purposes (Moore 1994: 127). The hierarchy of alterior opposition emerges within the context of social relations. As Thomas has argued, these are often “strategic reformulations” and do not represent “eternal properties of self–other relations” divorced from particular socio-historical moments (Thomas 1992: 171). (The strategic nature of this scheme is revealed in the rather apt Bedouin proverb: “I against my brother, my brother and I against our cousin, our cousins and us against the outsider.”) Nor does this assume a cognitive map, or that there are no other options available depending on shifting social relations.

Mapping Hui identifications

“This interstitial passage between fixed identifications opens up the possibility of a cultural hybridity,” Bhabha (1994: 4) has suggested, “that entertains without an assumed or imposed hierarchy.” Essentialized identifications make the construction of Hui Muslims as ambiguous possible, and at the same time, threatening to purifying projects. If we examine the case of the Hui described above, it becomes clear that Hui represent themselves as such depending on the nature of their interaction with others. Thus, Beijing and Shanghai Hui differ in language, custom, and locality, often leading to disruptive and nonhierarchical competitive business relations, often only until a non-Hui enters the scene. At this moment, the Beijing and Shanghai Hui may unite as

Fig. 9.6. RELATIONAL ALTERITY



“Hui,” and so on up the scale of interactions. When Hui or Dungan move outside of China, their “Chineseness” may become enhanced in interactions with non-Chinese, or “Muslimness” in interactions with non-Muslims. Indeed, the very nature of the Hui as a “nationality” is based on Chinese nationality policies that recognized them as an official *minzu*, giving them legal status. This initiated a process that I have described elsewhere in which a Muslim people became transformed into a minority nationality (Gladney 1991).

Dikötter on *minzu* see p. 113

Outside the confines of the Chinese nation-state, it should come as no surprise that the Hui will begin to regard themselves less as a nationality and emphasize other aspects of their identity, such as Islam or their Chinese language. This helps to understand how the Hui outside of China, from Malaysia to Istanbul, often relate to others simply as Muslims, hoping to override differences between “outsider” and “Chinese.” Here, I should note, there is nothing determinative in these relations. They are merely reflections of what I have observed in the field. The hierarchy of segmentation is not fixed; it is determined by the local context of difference, as defined by specific constellation of stereotypical relations, of hierarchy, power, class, and opposition that are often shifting and multifaceted, but never arbitrary. Thus, even in China, there have been times where Hui have united with Han Chinese against other Hui, when it was in their interest to do so, often downplaying their Muslim identity, in favor of cultural, ethnic, or linguistic similarities to the Han Chinese with whom they sought to share practical interests. The history of Gansu and Xinjiang is filled with these shifting power-alliances (see Forbes 1986), where brother united with brother, and sometimes with the Chinese, against a cousin who was often a rival Hui warlord (Lipman 1984). The relational alterity approach seeks to map out the significant fault lines of relation, opposition, and nodes of hierarchy—a heuristic way of depicting this phenomenon. It does not, of course, pretend to have predictive or universal, dehistoricized explanatory value.

The Hui as a group that describe their identity as in-between, or to follow Lila Abu-Lughod (1991) as “halfies,” transgress the nation-state insofar as it founds itself upon the notion of a unique sovereign group, one nation—one state, despite many examples to the contrary.

The Uyghur: indigeneities of place, space, and state recognition

A Uyghur CITS tour guide at the ancient Astana underground tombs outside of Turpan related the following statement to me:

The Uyghur people are the descendants of a high civilization of Central Asian nomadic people who had a kingdom based here in Turfan. The elegant paintings and wrapping in this tomb date to the Han Dynasty (206 BC – 220 AD) and are comparable in beauty and sophistication. A mummy in the Xinjiang Provincial Tombs also found in this area dates over 6000 years old and proves the Uyghur people are even older than the Han Chinese [personal interview, March 1985].

Chinese histories notwithstanding, every Uyghur firmly believes that his ancestors were the indigenous people of the Tarim basin, now known as Xinjiang. This land was “their” land. Nevertheless, I have argued elsewhere the constructed “ethnogenesis” of the Uyghur (Gladney 1990b). In his popular history of Xinjiang, Jack Chen noted the reintroduction of the term Uyghur to describe the Turkic inhabitants of Chinese Turkestan (Chen 1977: 100). While a collection of nomadic steppe peoples known as the “Uyghur” have existed since before the 8th century, this identity was lost from the 15th to 20th centuries. It is not until the fall of the Turkish Khanate (552–744 AD) to a people reported by the Chinese historians as Hui-he or Hui-hu that we find the beginnings of the Uyghur Empire described by Mackerras (1972). At this time, the Uyghur were but one collection of nine nomadic tribes, who initially in confederation with other Basmil and Karlukh nomads, defeated the Second Turkish Khanate and then dominated the federation under the leadership of Koli Beile in 742 (Sinor 1969: 113).

The historical Uyghur

Gradual sedentation of the Uyghur, and their defeat of the Turkish Khanate, occurred precisely as trade with the unified Tang state became especially lucrative. Samolin argues that the stability of rule, trade with the Tang and ties to the imperial court, as well as the growing importance of establishing fixed Manichaean ritual centers, contributed to a settled way of life for the Uyghur tribes (Samolin 1964: 74–5). Sedentation and interaction with the Chinese state was accompanied by socioreligious change: the traditional shamanistic Turkic-speaking Uyghur came increasingly under the influence of Persian Manichaeism, Buddhism, and eventually, Nestorian Christianity (Sinor 1969: 114–15). Extensive trade and military alliances along the old Silk Road with the Chinese state developed to the extent that the Uyghur gradually adopted cultural, dress, and even agricultural practices of the Chinese (Mackerras 1972: 37). Conquest of the Uyghur capital of Karabalghasun in Mongolia by the nomadic Kyrgyz in 840, without rescue from the Tang who may have become by then intimidated by the wealthy Uyghur empire, led to further sedentarization and crystallization of Uyghur identity.

Indeed, it is the Yugur nationality of Gansu today, not the Uyghur, who fled the Kyrgyz to Central China, who are thought to preserve much of the original Karakorum Uyghur history in their contemporary religious, linguistic, and cultural expression.

Ståhlberg on the Yugur

Sabira Ståhlberg (1995), who completed extensive fieldwork among the Yugur in Gansu, recently argued that they in fact are not directly descended from the 9th-century Karakorum Uyghur kingdom, but represent a hybrid group formed after the fall of Western Xia (12th century) combining Tibetan, Mongolian, Turkic, and Chinese influences in the “ethnic melting pot” of the Gansu corridor.

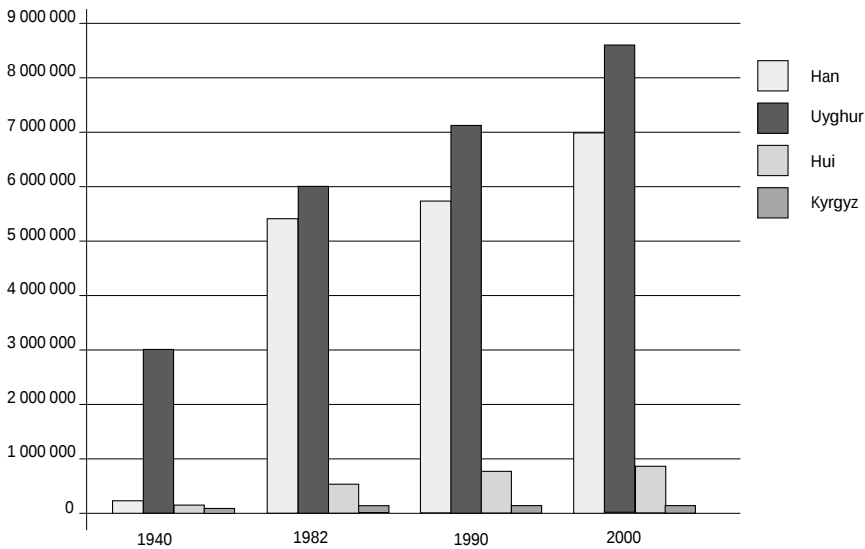
Map 9.3. Xinjiang (www.maps-of-china.com)

One branch that ended up in what is now Turpan, took advantage of the unique socioecology of the glacier-fed oases surrounding the Taklamakan and were able to preserve their merchant and limited agrarian practices, gradually establishing Khocho or Gaochang, the great Uyghur city-state based in Turfan for four centuries (850–1250).

The gradual Islamicization of the Uyghur from the 10th to as late as the 17th centuries (Barat, personal communication), while displacing their Buddhist religion, did little to bridge these oases-based loyalties. From that time on, the people of Uyghuristan centered in the Turfan depression who resisted Islamic conversion until the 17th century were the last to be known as Uyghur. The others were known only by their oasis or by the generic term of Muslims (Haneda 1978: 7). With the arrival of Islam, the ethnonym “Uyghur” fades from the historical record. Instead, we find the proliferation of such localisms as “yerlik” (persons of the land), “sart” (caravaneer), “taranchi” (agriculturalists from the Tarim basin transplanted to Yili under the Qianlong Emperor), and other oasis-based localisms. Justin Rudelson has convincingly argued that the “oasis identities” among the contemporary Uyghur often prevail over religious or national identity, dividing them along local and linguistic lines (Rudelson 1997).

Reconstituting the Uyghur

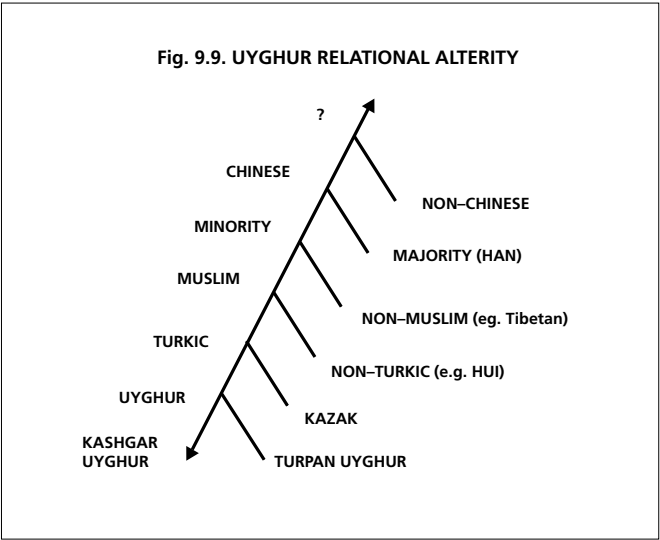
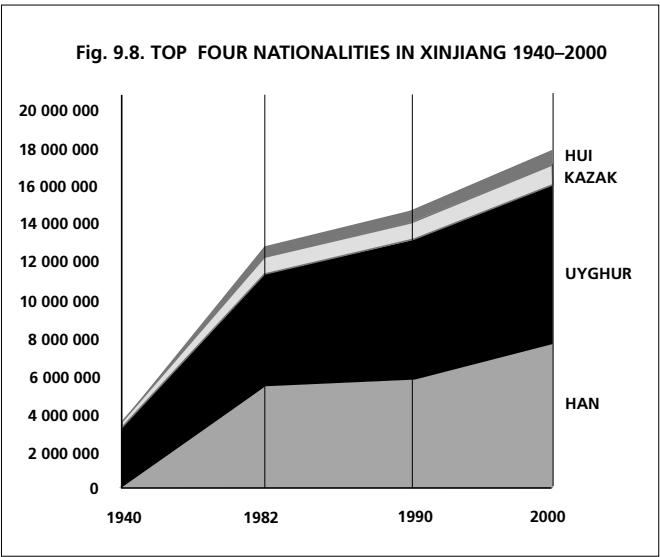
During the Republican period, Uyghur identity was again marked by factionalism along locality, religious and political lines. Forbes, in his detailed analysis of the complex warlord politics of Republican Xinjiang, finds important continuing distinctions

Fig. 9.7. MUSLIM AND HAN GROWTH IN XINJIANG

between the three macroregions of Xinjiang: the northwestern Zungaria, southern Tarim basin, and eastern Kumul-Turfan (“Uyghuristan”) areas (Forbes 1986). Rudelson’s dissertation confirms this persistent regional diversity along three, and he insightfully proposes that there are four macroregions, dividing the southern Tarim into two distinct socioecological regions (Rudelson 1992). The Uyghur were recognized as a nationality in the 1930s in Xinjiang under a Soviet-influenced policy of nationality recognition that contributed to a widespread acceptance today of continuity with the ancient Uyghur kingdom and their eventual “ethnogenesis” as a bona fide nationality (see Chen 1977, Gladney 1990b, Rudelson 1988).

This nationality designation not only masks tremendous regional and linguistic diversity, it also includes groups such as the Loplyk and Dolans that had very little to do with the oasis-based Turkic Muslims that became known as the Uyghur (see Svanberg 1989b, Hoppe 1995). Han migration to the region has meant that Uyghur population has shrunk from approximately 80 percent in the 1940s to less than 42 percent in the year 2000.

It is the argument of this chapter that diversity and factionalism within the Uyghur reflects a segmentary hierarchy of relationality common among all social groupings. Uyghur are divided from within by religious conflicts, in this case competing Sufi and non-Sufi factions, territorial loyalties (whether they be oases or places of origin), linguistic discrepancies, commoner–elite alienation, and competing political loyalties. It is also important to note that Islam was only one of several unifying markers for Uyghur identity, depending on those with whom they were in significant opposition at



the time. For example, to the Dungan (Hui), the Uyghur distinguish themselves as the legitimate autochthonous minority, since both share a belief in Sunni Islam. In contrast to the nomadic Muslim peoples (Kazak or Kyrgyz), Uyghur might stress their attachment to the land and oasis of origin. In opposition to the Han Chinese, the Uyghur will generally emphasize their long history in the region.

The indigenusness of the Uyghur poses a fundamental transgression of Chinese historiographies of the region, which is consonant with colonizing regimes seeking to



Fig. 9.10. Kashgar International Trade Market
(Photo: Jörg Schmiedmayer)

assert power in a region not previously their own. By moving the clock back far enough, any regime can claim the land as unoccupied. Claims of indigeneity always transgress nation-states that are founded most often under the conditions of postcoloniality.

The Kazak: nomadic nostalgia and the power of genealogy

When two Kazaks who do not know each other meet, they make their acquaintance by giving the lineage to which they belong and their closest patrilineal relatives. In East Berlin, Kazaks from Turkey established contact with Kazak guest students from the Mongolian People's Republic studying in the German Democratic Republic. As the Xinjiang Kazaks, the Kazaks from Mongolia belonged to the Orta Jüz group and generally also to the same lineages that are found in Turkey. In some cases they have found common kinship relations, which even led to organized meetings in East Berlin between relatives coming from Turkey and visitors from Mongolia (Svanberg 1989a: 116).

Ramazan Kubilay of Zeytinburnu, Istanbul, once declared to me (Gladney 1996) that he was a direct descendant of Genghis Khan, who he strongly believed was a Kazak nomad. Indeed, for most Kazaks, nomadism is only a distant memory to which they look in ethnic nostalgia. Robert B. Ekvall concluded his classic ethnography of Tibetan nomadic pastoralism, *Fields on the Hoof*, with the following dire prediction: "In the framework of communist doctrine and experience ... there is no logical and acceptable place for the nomad" (Ekvall 1968: 94). He was completely accurate with regard to the former Soviet Union, where among the entire population of over 7 million Kazaks there are now only a few seminomadic pastoralists remaining in the most remote desert regions.

His predictions for China, though not unreasonable at the time, were proven false. Indeed, the last few years have witnessed a resurgence of nomadic pastoralism in some grassland areas to the extent that the ecological balance of these zones has become threatened through overgrazing. Yang Li and Hsin-i Wu of the Gansu Grassland Ecological Research Institute recently reported that the privatization of land-use and herd

stocks in China came at the same time that the “free-market system was instituted in China and the government decreased the price control measures. Since then, the cost of animal products has soared; this has resulted in the overgrazing of China’s grasslands far beyond carrying-capacity” (Li and Wu 1990: 1).

Nomadic nostalgia, cross-border ties and identity debates

While it has yet to be demonstrated that Kazak pastoralists in the Altai Mountains have posed any threat to the grasslands of the alpine meadows or valley floors, Svanberg and Benson (1988: 200–205) and Humphrey and Sneath (1999: 176 ff) have documented a resurgence of traditional nomadic pastoralism with the free-market reforms. As descendants of the Turkish Khanate that dominated the Mongolian steppe in the 6th century AD, the Kazaks are pursuing a style of nomadic pastoralism that is derived from these Turkish ancestors, who, according to Joseph Fletcher (1979: 24), “developed steppe nomadism in its final form, the form in which the Mongols later adopted it.” Even as Kazak nomadism disappears from the Central Asian steppe, debate has raged in the former Soviet Union over the role of religion and Turkism in defining Kazak national identity. While some intellectuals argue for the role of Islam in defining Kazak identity, others maintain that it is only pan-Turkism that can unite the peoples of the steppe (see Saray 1993: 16–17). These endless debates have marred the important role of nomadism for Kazak national identity, the idea of a nomadic past that unites Kazaks transnationally from China to Central Asia to Turkey, among a people for whom, according to Martha Olcott’s study, “traditional Kazak culture defined a man through the animals he owned, making private ownership of livestock almost the definition of what it was to be Kazak” (Olcott 1987: 248). While Russian-speaking urban Kazaks in modern Almaty certainly do not wish to become nomads, I argue that a kind of “nomadic nostalgia” nevertheless characterizes much current discourse regarding the rediscovery of their pastoralist past, a resumed interest in pre-Islamic Kazak belief systems, an urge to preserve and discover “pure” Kazak nomadic traditions in the Altai Mountains of China, a continued lament over the tragedy of Stalinist sedentarization, and this discourse impedes to some extent the construction of a contemporary “Kazakstani” identity that includes non-Kazaks.

In the Altai Mountains of China, with the pervasiveness of market economies in China and the former Soviet Union, and the increasing contacts of these Kazaks with the large immigrant community in Turkey, the role of animal husbandry and Kazak identity is resurfacing as an important factor in changes in their socioecological nexus (Kazakh 1987). During interviews with Kazak immigrants in the Zeytinburnu district of Istanbul (see Gladney 1996, Svanberg 1989a), I found a population that largely defined itself in terms of its burgeoning leather and tanning industry, with leather fashion boutiques run by extended Kazak networks in Istanbul, Paris, London, Berlin, Stockholm, and New York. Now that more unrestricted travel has been taking place between Turkey, Kazakhstan, and China (there are direct flights from Istanbul to Ürümqi, Istanbul to Almaty, and Almaty to Ürümqi, which I flew in May and June 1993, as well as the Eurasian rail connection between Ürümqi and Almaty which I traveled in October 1995), Kazaks once separated by artificial political boundaries are beginning to trade and exchange ideas and products to an unprecedented extent.

When I have asked Kazaks in Istanbul and in Germany why they attempted so hard to preserve what they thought to be a “traditional” Kazak identity, they often have told me, “We are descended from the great Kazak nomad leader Genghis Khan (he was Kazak you know, not Mongol), we know our entire genealogy, and it is the first thing every Kazak remembers about themselves, besides being Muslim. Whenever we meet another person who looks Kazak on the street, we don’t ask them if they are Kazak, but what Kazak lineage, which Jüz they are from. Then we can see just how closely we are related.”

Facing yet another nation-state: the Turkish construction of “Turkness”

Since the dissolution of the former Soviet Union in 1991, they have had many more opportunities to do so. The Turkish government gave 10,000 scholarships to invite Central Asians to study in Turkey while I was there in 1992–93, and 10,000 more in successive years. Many were not prepared for the difficult adjustment that they would have living in Turkey. Not only did they complain about the cramped dorms and less money than they were expected to receive, but also how difficult Turkish was to learn, how horrible the food was (no rice pilaf), and how different the culture was from home. They did not take to Turkish society as quickly as the politicians in Ankara expected. And many Central Asians eventually returned from Turkey disappointed by what they found there, complaining of its secularism, hedonism, and inferior education, which many of them found far beneath their Russian training. At the same time, Turks in Turkey discovered how different they were from their “ancestors” and “distant cousins,” leading to increasingly public doubts about Atatürk’s dogma regarding the Central Asian origins of the Turks.

The problem is we do not know much about these “sub-Turkic” peoples, since they are regarded by the Turkish state as just “Turks” and not counted as minorities. Though there have been many studies on the official minorities in Turkey, the Armenians, Greeks, Jews, and even the Kurds, there has been almost nothing done on the sub-Turkic identities, since most assumed that once these people came to Turkey, they just blended in, becoming Turk, or what is culturally and politically defined as “White” in the U.S. (see Frankenberg 1993), just as in China, Cantonese, Shanghainese, and Hakka are defined as “Han.”

One Swedish scholar, Ingvar Svanberg, noticed the profoundly different acculturation patterns of Uyghurs and Kazaks in Turkey (Svanberg 1989a). Svanberg estimated that there are 60–100,000 of these Inner Asian émigrés, but we really do not know, because they are not counted by a state interested in defining a majority, through quantifying only certain minorities. Despite the popular Turkish proverb: “Türkiyede yetmişbir küçük milliyet var” (“There are 71 and a half⁶ nations/ethnoreligious groups in Turkey”).

⁶ The half milliyet (“religious,” “national” or “ethnoreligious group”) in Turkey refers, of course, to the Gypsies.

Atatürk's policy was to stress Central Asian Turkish origins, and then limit interaction with Central Asia to keep the Russians from getting nervous about pan-Turkism. Once the borders opened, Turks traveling to "Turkestan" were surprised to find Kazaks, Uzbeks, and Kyrgyz whom they could hardly understand, and who were not interested in acquiring yet another "elder brother" (ağa bey) after losing the Soviets.

My study in Turkey was designed to try to understand the construction of this "whiteness" by looking at sub-Turkic ethnicity, just as I questioned the construction of "Hanness" in China through looking at the construction of minority identity among the Hui and other minorities (see Gladney 1994a, Gladney 1996). This calls into question the nature of majority representation as "homogeneous" in these regions, and "heterogeneous" in Europe, as Hobsbawm seems to suggest: "... China, Korea, and Japan, which are indeed among the extremely rare examples of historic states composed of a population that is ethnically almost or entirely homogeneous ... Thus of the (non-Arab) Asian states today, Japan and the two Koreas are 99% homogeneous, and 94% of the People's Republic of China are Han" (Hobsbawm 1991: 66, and nt. 7). For Hobsbawm and other Eurocentric nationality theorists (and here I include Greenfeld 1992 and Samuel Huntington, e.g., his "West versus the rest" Huntington 1993: 4), Europe and the West are troped as heterogeneous and diverse, while the "Orient" is broken up into more or less homogeneous national chunks.

Chinese Kazaks as objects of a cross-border nomadic nostalgia

The continued salience of "nomadic nostalgia" to contemporary Kazak identity in Kazakhstan is clearly demonstrated by their recently selected national symbol: the flag coat of arms of Kazakhstan, which has the famous flying horses beneath the interior dome of the yurt on a field of blue sky.

In my interviews with Kazak pastoralists in the Southern Pastures of the Tianshan in 1987, 1992, 1995 and in the Zhaosu Tianshan region in 2001, and in the Altai mountain regions in 2001–2, I often found that whereas a traditional Kazak auyıl had the mutual participation of all members in a wide-range of tasks, each household of the clan in the postcollectivist period divided up the various tasks of nomadic pastoralism: herding, marketing, leather processing, and rug-making. This was almost completely abolished during the Chinese collectivization campaigns of the 1960s and 1970s and the deprivatization of the herds, just as under Stalin in the 1920s and 1930s. There was no inherent incentive to care for the animals when the state controlled the profits, and traditional shared work roles were reassigned to specific collective enterprise tasks. The traditional household and auyıl economies were dismantled. Now that there has been a return to traditional nomadic pastoralism in China and the private ownership of animals, one would expect a resurgence of traditional household and auyıl economic organization. However, unlike the traditional Kazak social structure as outlined by Alfred Hudson (1938) and Lawrence Krader (1963), one now finds that often each yurt will perform specialized tasks for the entire clan or auyıl: one household will be responsible for herding, another for marketing, and another for production of certain leather goods, crafts, or rugs. While this may not be the rule for all Kazak auyıls of the Altai, it represents a new form of household economy and social organization that is perhaps due to the collectivized experience of the 1960s and 1970s. These households

are also becoming tied into the local and transnational economies through the marketing of their products. This reorganization of traditional household economies may be one factor in the increased herd sizes reported in the Altai and will be an important aspect in the changing socioecology of the region.

The Kazaks of Kazakhstan and Turkey look to the nomads of the Altai as their living cultural ancestors. Understanding of this nomadic way of life will assist in determining the evolving nature of Kazak national identity. It is a way of life that is resurgent, albeit in a somewhat altered form, in China, while passing away elsewhere. It is clear that in reciting the oft-memorized genealogies among the Kazaks, nomadism and its cultural by-products loom large as an important factor in their representation of Kazak identity. For the Kazaks, the tracing of genealogy is a much more powerful force in their identity construction than we have found for either Hui or Uyghur. For Kazaks, their identity is represented as segmentary in principle. For the Hui, a generalized notion of descent from foreign Muslim ancestors is important for contemporary identity. It does not really matter to modern Hui if these ancestors may have been Arab, Persian, or Turk, only that they were Muslim, migrated to China, and maintained their distinctive identities. For the Uyghur, knowledge of genealogy seems to be important only as it relates to the land, as proof of early Uyghur settlement in the Tarim oases, prior to the Chinese or other nomadic Turks. The keeping of detailed genealogies, according to my Uyghur informants in Xinjiang and Turkey, is something the Chinese like to do, not them. Indeed, it is Kazak preoccupation with genealogical minutiae that not only influences mate-selection and nomadic nostalgia, but may also contribute to an increased awareness of identity.

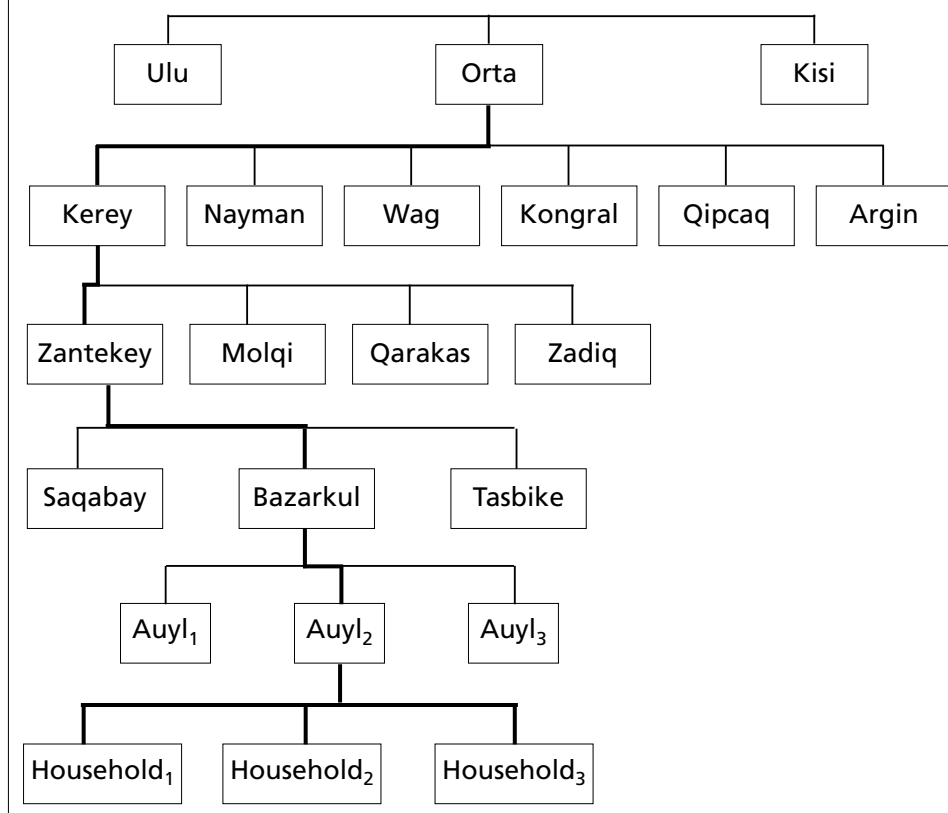
A Kazak genealogy

A typical Kazak genealogy among members of the Saqabay sublineage with whom I interacted in Istanbul is several levels deep.

At the highest level, most Kazaks among the Saqabay knew they were descendants of the Orta Jüz (mistranslated "Middle Horde" or in Turkish, "orda," which refers to the original tribal military formations). At the level Kazaks refer to as "tayipa" (from the Arabic, *tayifa*), which Svanberg (1989a:115) translates as "tribe" and Hudson (1938: 19) as "uru" (Krader 1963 as "ru") they identified with the Kerey. At the next level of ru, or "lineage" (Svanberg 1989a: 115), they traced their lineage to the Zantekey. Yet many Kazaks call all of these levels jüz or ru, and there is no real consistency. At the base is the emphasis upon migration groups known as "auyl" (or "awl" Hudson 1938: 19), which would have been comprised of different households, related by these complicated descent lines. It was clear, however, that a Saqabay would rarely marry a Bazarkul or Tasbike, and only with great reluctance marry outside of the Zantekey line. As Svanberg notes, beyond the Kerey, there was not much knowledge of specific connections to other Orta lineages. This knowledge is increasing, however, with frequent travel to Central Asia, where Kazak members of the Ulu (or "Great") Orda are primarily concentrated. Interactions traditionally would move up the scale from household to auyl to lineage.

Now, there is specific interest only at the lineage and above level, since migration groups have changed dramatically as noted above. It is noteworthy that distinction

Fig. 9.11. KAZAK LINEAGE

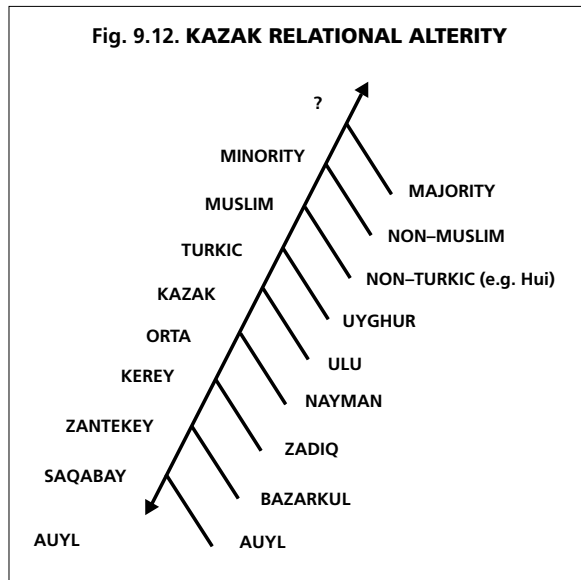


from Uyghur and Hui only takes place at the sixth and seventh levels of interaction, revealing a much higher range of relations than has been described for Uyghur or Hui. Kazak preoccupation with genealogy is reflected in their more detailed scale of relational alterity.

Gladney on lineage revival

In an interesting recent paper on "Ethnic Composition in Xinjiang," Thomas Hoppe (1995) has presented a strikingly similar hierarchy of opposition among the Kyrgyz pastoralists of southwestern Xinjiang. It is interesting that while Kyrgyz and Kazak preserve a fascination for lineage and genealogy as former nomadic pastoralists, this is not the case for the Uyghur and Hui groupings discussed in this paper.

In a fascinating parallel, Uradyn Erden Bulag (1998: 47) demonstrates in his groundbreaking thesis that contemporary Mongols in Mongolia are reviving their genealogy and clan names (*obog*), which had been lost under Soviet influence.



Nomadic nostalgia as nation-building instrument

Genealogies travel well. Kazak notions of transhumance based on the auyl that trace to the roots of nomadic descent lines also extend far beyond any contemporary configurations of the nation-state. It allows Kazak networks that extend throughout Central Asia, China, Turkey, and Europe. For Kazaks who have in the past been socially restricted from marrying any relative within five generations, the oral genealogical tradition becomes a critically important cognitive map of relational alterity—defining potential spouses, allies, and trading partners. Despite the disappearance of complete nomadic pastoralism in the former Soviet Central Asia, where we rarely find herders traveling as families, nomadic nostalgia can be seen in public monumentalism, museum displays, the revival of “nomadic” popular culture in song and poetry and it even finds its representation on the Kazak and Kyrgyz State seals and flags.



Fig. 9.13. Kazakhstan's flag and national emblem

On a field of blue, the Kazakhstan flag shows the symbol of an eagle soaring past a golden sun, reminiscent of the days when Kazak pastoralists hunted with eagles. Remarkably absent are any references to Soviet or even Islamic influences. Even

more reminiscent of a nomadic past, the State Seal of Kazakhstan is bordered by the famous winged horses of Ferghana, with the framework of the yurt (Kazak: *kyrgyzyu*; Mongolian: *ger*) in the background. Perhaps indicative of socialist heritage, a star rises at the top of the seal. At the very center of the seal and, indeed, at the heart of Kazak nomadic genealogical symbolism, is the “shanyrak” or center of the yurt. It is the only part of the tent that does not collapse, and is handed down father-to-son, generation-to-generation, according to the genealogical rules outlined above.



Fig. 9.14. Kyrgyzstan's flag

Indeed, on the Kyrgyzstan flag, the shanyrak becomes the very center of the flag and the focus of the nation. Nomadic nostalgia for a segmentary tradition continues to be important for vernacular and official identifications.

As Charles Scott has argued, “Genealogies are ways of allowing differences, discontinuities, and the priority of exteriority and spatial imagery while one comes to know various ordered regions of human life” (Scott 1990: 57).

Relational alterities and the Han

This approach has attempted to describe the context of “both/and” identities: how it is that, say, a person who calls himself a “Turkestani” can be both Kashgari and Uyghur, Muslim and Turk, Chinese and Central Asian. In China, all of these groups are Chinese citizens, and travel on a Chinese passport, whether they like it or not. The project then becomes not any essentialized attempt at a final definition of the meanings of these representations (i.e., what is a Uyghur), but an examination of the conditions of relationality (i.e., when is a Uyghur). As this chapter has argued, being Uyghur is not as meaningful for younger émigrés in Istanbul, nor was it between the 15th and early 20th centuries, but it certainly has become relevant for the 8–9 million oasis-dwelling Turkic people who have been labeled “Uyghur” since 1934 as a result of nation-state incorporation, Great Game rivalries, and Sino-Soviet nationality policies.

These identities are particularly called into question once people move across national borders and become members of the transnational diaspora. The project then becomes not any essentialized attempt at a final definition of the meanings of these representations, but an examination of when they come to the fore, and with whom they are asserted. As Bhabha has noted:

It is in the emergence of the interstices—the overlap and displacement of domains of difference—that the intersubjective and collective experiences of nationness, community interest, or cultural value are negotiated. How are subjects formed “in-between,” or in excess of, the sum of the “parts” of difference (usually intoned as

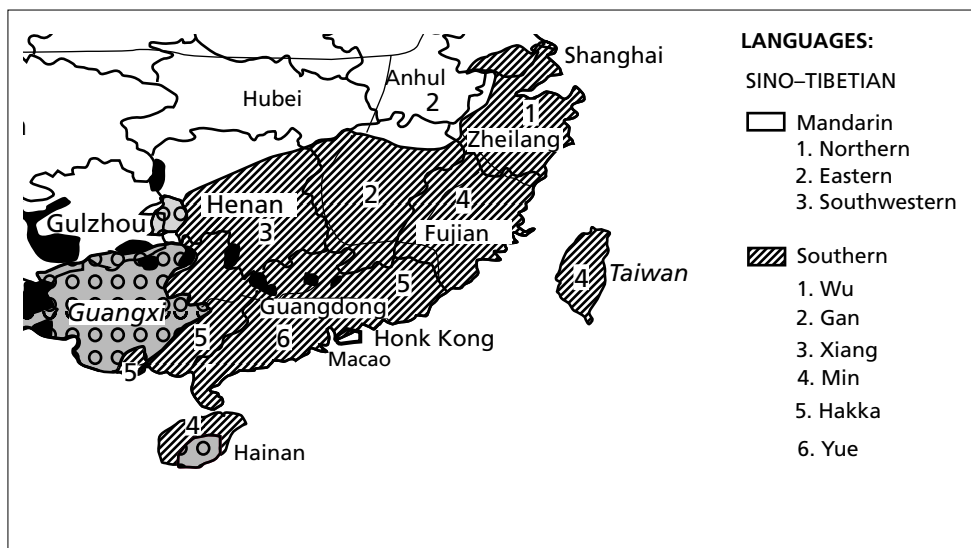
race/class/gender, etc.)?... Increasingly, “national” cultures are being produced from the perspective of disenfranchised minorities (Bhabha 1994: 2–6).

The post-Cold War period has led to a downward movement of opposition: it is no longer a U.S.–Soviet–Chinese trilateral configuration, but a much more particularized, multipolar, and multivalent world, where shifting identities may move quickly up and down or even between scales of relation depending on specific circumstances. Without the Russian and U.S. threat to China’s sovereignty, lower-level identities may increasingly come into play, evidenced by increasing “southern nationalisms” among the Cantonese, Fujianese, Hakka, and others empowered by new-found economic wealth.

Majority identities are not immune to change

This project also calls into question the nature of majority national identities in Turkey, the former Soviet Union, and China. Recent studies of the Marxist influence on national identity construction in these regions have often ignored the process by which majority groups get constructed: the Turk, the Russian, and the Han Chinese. The “Turk” in Ottoman history, was the tent-dwelling nomad, and not held up as the admirable essence of Turkish nationhood until the rush from empire to nation associated with Atatürk. A similar transition from empire to nation led the early Chinese nationalists to appropriate a Japanese-derived term for nation (*minzoku*) and label initially 5 under the nationalists and later 56 groups under the Communists as “nations” (*minzu*). The notion of the Han as a *minzu* (nationality) is a quite recent phenomenon, popularized by **Sun Yat-sen** in relational opposition to Tibetans, Mongols, Manchu, and Hui, in his 5 peoples policy, and more importantly, to the foreign imperialists, all of whom were perceived as “nations” (Gladney 1994a). The category of “Han” as a people was actually left to China by the Mongols, who included all northern peoples as Han (including the Koreans), as distinguished from southerners (*nan ren*), Central Asians (*semu ren*), and the Mongols. Now that higher-level post-imperial, and then Cold War, oppositions have subsided, China may find itself moving down the scale into serious sub-Han ethnic and national alterities, particularly with the economic rise of southern nationalisms, historically and linguistically less identified with the Han ethnonym.

It is clear that we must attend to the nature of shifting national identities in these regions, and the impact of changing international geopolitics. But geopolitics is not enough, as these processes of identity formation and re-formation cannot be understood without attention to historiography and cultural studies. It is even more apparent that relations between Turkey, Russia, and China will hinge on the shifting identities of the mainly Turkic, mainly Muslim peoples in the region. Identities, as this chapter has sought to show, are not easily united across pan-Turkic or pan-Islamic lines. The styles of national identity among these groups pose fundamental challenges, or transgressions, to the nation-states they find themselves in: Uyghur indigeneity rejects Chinese claims to “their” land; Kazak idealization of nomadic transhumance suggests that no nation-state should be allowed to contain them; and Hui hybridity argues against the very notion of the “nation,” that the diasporic condition is part of every-

Map. 9.4. The "Han" as *minzu*, majority nationality

one's modern and postmodern predicament, and that there is no pure nation, ethnicity, or race that can claim state power on that alone. Perhaps this belief in hybridity has generally kept the Hui from voicing separatist tendencies.

In China, recognition of official national identities has empowered these groups in their claims against the nation, particularly for the Hui and Uyghur, to a crystallization and ethnogenesis of identities—identities that have now moved above and beyond the bounds of the Chinese nation-state, encouraging other unrecognized groups to push for recognition and political power. And lest one think that these so-called “marginal” unrecognized peoples are irrelevant to Chinese history and society, we must remember that the Taipings had their origins in the southwestern corner of the country, in Guangxi among the Hakka and Yao, splitting and nearly toppling the Qing Empire. The person who helped bring the Qing finally to an end was Dr. Sun Yat-sen, a true member of the modern transnational diaspora, a Cantonese, born and raised in Hawaii, educated in Japan. Nevertheless, Dr. Sun was effective in mobilizing China's internal others against the foreign others, Manchu and Western imperialists, creating a new Chinese national identity that may be just as fragile as the old. Identities shift as individuals move across these many borders, and as Zhuangzi reminds us, these identities are formed in relation to others across the field of social and political interactions: “If there is no ‘other’ then we do not have a ‘self,’ if there is no ‘self,’ then we do not have anything to grasp.”

Conclusion: minority as commodity and feminized other in China

The furor over the nominating of the film *Ju Dou* for an Academy Award was primarily due to its offensiveness to Chinese moral and hierarchical sensibilities, according to the press (WuDunn 1991: B1). Not surprisingly, *Ju Dou* was made by a product of the Xi'an film studio, director Zhang Yimou, who starred in Wu Tianming's iconoclastic film, *Old Well*. Her elderly, probably impotent, husband physically abuses Ju Dou, a young bride, for not being able to become pregnant. She is beaten repeatedly, tied, and even pinned down by a horse-saddle on which her elderly husband sits while he sexually abuses her, in what may probably be China's first, and perhaps last, bondage-style film. In order to save herself (the old man had already beaten to death two previous wives), she seduces his adopted son, and the resulting story of their infidelities is what the Chinese find most offensive. Just as Ju Dou is expected to accept her fate, even at the point of death, so are Han Chinese women required to restrict their sexuality in the services of the state. Similarly, minority women are allowed to be portrayed erotically because that too serves the interests of the regime. This may also be a contributing factor in the state's general exemption of most minorities from the birth-planning program. Minority women are encouraged to be fecund; their bodies are less controllable than that of the ritually bound Han women. Perhaps one metaphorical reason the state exempts most minorities from birth planning is to preserve the notion that minorities represent uncontrolled sensuality, fertility, and reproductivity; Han represent controlled, civilized, productivity. Yet it is primarily not women's bodies that are at issue, it is the state's (and by extension, the patriarchal male's) control of them.

In a fascinating parallel to the "Thaibathers" motif pervading much of minority art, there is a critical moment in *Ju Dou* in which Yang Tianqing, the adopted son, voyeuristically observes *Ju Dou* bathing through a hole in the washroom wall. This scene bears striking resemblance to the voyeurism of the Miao men and film viewers of Miao women bathers in the *Amazing Marriage Customs* film described above. Note that in each case it is water and bathing that leads to the voyeuristic gaze and the construction of the sexual object. As he enlarges the hole for a better view, she discovers him and covers the hole with straw from the inside of the washroom. Later, she once again finds that he has removed the straw from the inside for an unobstructed view. This time, however, in a radical departure from traditional Chinese female modesty (but more like the Miao and Thai bathers), she allows him to view her naked body, savagely marked by his adopted father's beatings. The shock engendered by her beautiful but grotesquely bruised body both compels and humiliates the viewer. Similarly, Han voyeurism of minority women, and the submission of Han women to the patriarchal social order, is what the state, for its own self-perpetuating reasons, considers proper in China.

Zhang Yimou's reversal of those roles in his film *Ju Dou*, delegitimizes the state's authority to objectivize the Other, both woman and minority, and this may be an important factor in the Chinese attempt to prevent its nomination for an Academy Award.

By turning her gaze directly back on the adopted son, Ju Dou both humiliates him and establishes her subjectivity, resisting his use of her as an object of sexual desire. By taking her affairs into her own hands, and later seducing him, she establishes her own identity and asserts individuality.

Self-exoticization as resistance

Minorities, too, by allowing the objectivizing gaze of the state-sponsored media, establish their identity and right to a voice in their own affairs, appropriating and turning whenever possible these objectivizing moves to their own benefit. In this way, the maintenance and assertion of minority “culture,” no matter how exoticized or contrived, may be seen as a form of resistance. By participating in their “training” by the Han Chinese state, supporting minority art and culture, they often find ways to promote values that may be contrary to the state’s modernizing program. Despite being willing participants, performers, and actors in the state and semiprivate public venues of theme parks and television shows, the “ethnic others” of China have found a way to express their many-layered selves in ways that both preserve and promote them. They are rarely conflicted about such mutual exploitations.

These glimpses of a more naturalized, colorful, liberated, and sensual lifestyle, that urban Han Chinese now find so alien to their own living situations, contributes to their popularity as colonized and gendered subjects (see Chatterjee 1986: 624). It also might explain why minorities and their exoticized portrayal in the Yunnan Art School are extremely popular in the West, where many long for a similar naturalized lifestyle, often as a way of critiquing China’s image as a totalitarian homogenizing state. Successful marketization of these images in the global capitalist economy perpetuates minority/majority discourses in China and abroad. The appearance within and without China of books, courses, and institutions devoted to the study of “China’s Minorities” reflects this homogenization: the pretense that one could draw a clear line between the minorities and the rest of “Han” China. This chapter has argued otherwise, attempting to directly link minority with majority discourses in the public sphere. In China and elsewhere, constructing minority identities is directly related to that of the majority.



Fig. 9.15. Chinese Ethnic Culture Park, Beijing

As Hanness is related to “whiteness,” so the majority in China is invented as an unmarked category, courtesy of a subjugated, stigmatized, and identified minority.

Though alienated moderns may wax nostalgic over exoticized representations of imagined pasts, the belated arrival in China of Hobsbawm’s (1991: 163) universalized “nationality principle” coupled with the government’s expressed desire to be reckoned as a “modern nation-state” indicates that the identification, and exploitation, of minorities for tourist dollars and nationalization programs will mean their continued stigmatization as exoticized subjects—a stigma that they may only infrequently turn to their own benefit. Minority co-optation of these motifs may help increase their own autonomy, turning the tables of representation. Yet these attempts at subjectivity and independence will always be threatening to any totalizing, objectivizing state that seeks homogeneity of the majority at the expense of the minority. It is no surprise that *Ju Dou* was banned and minorities are encouraged to do little more than sing and dance in the People’s Republic.

Chapter 10

The Contemporary Intellectual Context of the *China Inside Out* Project

GEORGE E. MARCUS

Introduction

The conception of the *China Inside Out* project is shaped by an effort at a “take,” a set of observations, on the contemporary history of theory and intellectual fashion as it unfolds in certain interdisciplinary and reformed disciplinary arenas concerned with issues of culture, ideas, ideology, and the classic themes of qualitative social science. We are especially interested in the substantive effects of these tendencies on the practices of anthropologists, historians, and sociologists, among others—not only on research practices (particularly on the signature fieldwork-ethnography paradigm of anthropology), but also on the imaginaries (the current ideas, evoked images, moral stances) that inspire the shaping of research projects as well as on the rhetorics that justify the writings that are the product of research.

We have therefore followed with considerable interest the recent pleas to reconceptualize area studies according to new influences defined largely by interdisciplinary critiques and initiatives from the 1980s (for which, for example, *Writing Culture* [Clifford and Marcus 1986] remains a strongly symbolic and evocative text). *China Inside Out* is an effort to enact a transformation of area studies in pedagogical text-making. It is an opportunity to examine how successfully a set of intellectual inspirations to see the world differently, so to speak, can change the older conventions of area studies—in this case, of China, a powerfully and essentially constructed object of Western social science (Shambaugh 1997). Here we offer some preliminary comments about the way that this project is framed and the way that it manages some of its key concepts and intellectual tendencies.

Since about 1990, globalization has become the most generic macrosociological term and image for the present era, in a sense replacing the earlier, but more controversial currency of the concept of *postmodernity* fashionable (at least in the United States and in academic circles) during the 1970s and through the 1980s. Globalization is a much more widely distributed and sustained term of reference for our contemporary condition. It signals many things in social thought and has stimulated more or less elaborate and theoretically substantive discussions across a variety of fields.

In some circles the interest in globalization is whether it is an irresistible homogenization through Americanization

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or not. In others, it is in what form it takes and how these spread and take shape locally through privatization, democratic politics, humanitarianism, wars, patron–client relationships, and information technology (see Berger and Huntington 2002; Kalb et al. 2000; Featherstone 1996 for some discussions of globalization). In others again, the interest is in defining the prime movers of globalization—is it, for example, the international financial system, or marketing science that is most constitutive of globalization?—and in still others, the stakes are in the politics and ambitions of knowledge industries—whether globalization requires adjustments in the older metanarratives like Marxism, or whether it requires a break with past hegemonic theories in favor of sustained “bricolage” (the survival of the postmodernist ethos).

The first wave of area studies critique

In academia, certainly, the first wave of theory about globalization suggested radical changes in the conventional framings of area studies based on new realities such as qualitatively different and intensified transnational processes (e.g., the renovation of long established thinking about migration brought about by new theorizations of diaspora). These coincided with the end of the Cold War (with immense implications for preexisting habits of thought and writing among left/liberal scholars). They also arrived both with, as noted, a clear sense of the exhaustion concerning politically ambiguous discussions about **postmodernity**, and with excitement about postcolonial theory now at the center of critical inquiry into culture. Also, there was the specter of millennial technological change in the arrival of the Internet (recall the discussions of “Y2K,” the possible social implications of a technological failure if computers could not have managed the date change to year 2000!), evoking seamless connection, network, and global reach. All of these events contributed to the particular milieu of early expressions of the conceptual imaginary that defined the alternative to conventional area studies.

The key issue on which this early expression of transformed area studies focused was the fate of the nation-state in the emergence of new (transnational, globalizing) conditions. This is indeed the central conceptual issue to which the *China Inside Out* project is oriented. This first-wave expression foresaw, optimistically, and perhaps desirously, the displacement of the nation-state in importance as a form of organization in these changes, in favor of new, emergent, transnational forms. It created the sort of provocation that inspired debate and led to the overthrow of conventions in area studies. But this formulation was also, in several respects, highly ideological: the idea that the (bourgeois or authoritarian) nation-state, always a nemesis in left/liberal thought, was losing ground to more populist developments in the space of the transnational was, in a sense, a compensation for the loss of a Marxist or socialist alternative. Diaspora, the transnational became an idealized space of possibility. The tropes and claims of literature on colonialism and postcoloniality (produced largely by scholars of South Asian origin) reanimated work in fields like anthropology by providing analytic strategies that emphasized identity struggles and weighed the agency of subject peoples by probing their resistance and accommodation to states, market regimes, and dominating political economies. This body of scholarship represented an opposi-

tion to the post-Cold War triumphalism that proclaimed through the form of nation-states that the world was becoming more homogeneous in the spread of neoliberal models.

The second wave

The contributions to *China Inside Out* clearly recognize that the original formulations of globalization were overly optimistic about the demise of the nation-state, and sensibly, they collectively take a more empirical view of the “state” of the nation-state in relation to transnational movements. In the specific case of China, they demonstrate, the nation-state is both weakened and strengthened in complex ways by transnational phenomena.

Any distinctive contribution by anthropology (and for that matter, by the traditions of area studies scholarship) to the multilateral and multidisciplinary fascination with the era of contemporary change as a process of globalization depends on specifying and focusing objects of study that are consistent with the tradition of “**thick description**” in ethnographic reporting and microanalysis, yet require fundamental shifts in the “optics” and techniques of situating by which these traditions have succeeded in the past. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, anthropology participated in both the fascination with globalization as the new and politically relevant context of those changes in cultures that had earlier been discussed under the sign of postmodernism, and its spirited critique. This participation generated new ways of thinking about nationalism, identity struggles, and ethnicity. In these, first attempts at trying to conceptualize globalization, anthropology, sociology, and geography produced a few visionary writings of great influence, perhaps best exemplified by the “scapes” and “flows” essays of Arjun Appadurai (1993, 1996). Other such texts include those by Glick Schiller et al. (1994), Ulf Hannerz (1991, 1996), and David Harvey (1989).

New ways but no new norms

Through much of the 1990s, in the absence of new methods or a concerted renovation of tried and true practices of fieldwork and ethnography, these works stood not so much as the framework on which new research programs were built, but as the context in which work done in the traditional ways could be interpreted. These visionary rhetorics provided the impetus for reconceiving the ways in which the inventories of peoples and places long researched by anthropology and area studies scholarship could still be relevant and remain the center of attention. Although limited, this was a start in the incorporating of issues of globalization into area studies and ethnography, and as such, it was no mean achievement.

In anthropology, then, the majority of studies are still of local situations, the fate of peoples, sometimes as they are displaced, rather than the engines and central processes of globalization itself. Yet the new context of anthropology—and of area studies—means that one can no longer “just” study a group or a location without the justification of some unbounded intellectual agenda. The *mise en scène* for fieldwork has been permanently altered, to the approval of some and the regret of others. While this is

undoubtedly constraining for the sorts of inquiries that traditional fieldwork served, it can be liberating for projects such as James Farrer's (2002), who could legitimately live a student's party life in Shanghai and then make a valuable ethnography of it.

Academic departments whose traditional focus is on fieldwork are thus infused with new ideas, but many of their leading practitioners are trained classically. Those who have promoted new views of nationalism and the transnational, and of changing local transformations in the face of globalizing processes, are products of traditional disciplinary educations, to which they are provocatively reacting. They have not yet been in a position to design the modalities or exemplars of research practice to institutionalize the alternative visions that they have been pioneering. *China Inside Out* represents predominantly this state of area studies scholarship in transition. It is an attempt to implement the vision and discussion of the first wave of globalization-inspired area studies critique while maintaining a traditional sense of the object of study.

This vast wave of research following the initial visionary formulations is realizing, in sustained projects of historical and ethnographic research, some of the "first-wave" ideas about the transnational and the transformations of the nation-state in the vortex of contemporary change. As noted, most of its authors are still traditionally trained in terms of the modalities that produced earlier area studies scholarship. They do not have new norms of technique or method for how to do this work, and many are making it up as they go along. This describes a number of the chapters of this project, those in particular that are self-conscious about the need for changed research practices, and especially those that provide discussions about readapting classic ethnography to new circumstances, the need to mix methods, and pay particular attention to media, for example.

Some authors are self-consciously operating with a methodological eclecticism, while others attempt to stretch existing theoretical models. One promising development here is the reconciliation of the concerns of institutional sociology—as exemplified by Michael Burawoy (2000)—with anthropology under the influence of cultural studies styles of designing ethnography. Sociology remained relatively uninfluenced by literary theory and therefore dares to offer conclusions. In this respect, it has stayed in better health when it speaks to power and policymaking circles than anthropological theory and practice, which, critically concerned about its own contexts of production, has lost much of its confidence in offering unambiguous and apparently usable conclusions about what is going on in the world. This unwillingness to produce "results" is one reason that anthropology has more difficulty in attracting the attention of policy-makers and activists than does sociology. Yet, these influences from the humanistic disciplines have made anthropology healthier than sociology in terms of a greater experimental play of ideas and an exploration of plausibly alternative imaginaries and possibilities within the frame of doing ethnography. So the reconciliation between the two would certainly be beneficial to each.

It would also be beneficial to area studies, where the methodological focus shifted first from sociology and political science in the postwar period to anthropology and history in the eighties and nineties, and then—in part as an answer to the first wave of critique—to cultural/postcolonial studies as well as to applied fields (public health, urban studies, business studies, environmental studies) in the 2000s. In other words, area studies, which started their postwar American career in touch with broad (though

often flawed) social and political theorizing, have increasingly veered toward the speculative or the applied. But area studies continue to provide a fruitful meeting ground for the two approaches.

What this project does

Virtually all of *China Inside Out*'s chapters stay focused largely on the range of questions and orientations provided for in the early formulations for revising conventional area studies. This means that this project emphasizes the politics of identity foremost, that it tends to look at the predicaments of mostly marginalized peoples and minorities, or simply at the situation of peoples in their everyday lives and possibilities. Some of the chapters, however, also provide discussions of the changing and adaptive character of the state in relation to new transnational political economies. For example, Duara speaks of a cultural narrative now dominating statecraft rather than the older class-based views, and he mentions the new role of markets in framing or giving new terms to the thinking of politicians. This would suggest that the symbols of the nation-state are now transacted differently by those who are most invested with perpetuating it. At the very least, the changing relations between the state and media are important, as is the rise of a consumer culture overseen by advertising industries, marketing science, real estate development and other kinds of expert adaptations to a new horizon and scale in which Chinese identities are constructed. These are the sorts of issues involved when one speaks of post-Tiananmen China. The resonances of these concerns are already in the chapters, but as we will discuss below, their focused treatment is one of the promising directions to pursue in a future agenda for area studies.

Pragmatically speaking, however, making area studies more relevant to global processes and vice versa depends not on some further spectacular vision or how-to technique—although brilliant exemplars and conceptions of ethnography continue to be useful along the way—but on the more modest, simple move of bringing together research traditions in area studies that had largely been kept apart. This is what this project does. Often in area studies, especially in response to theoretical tendencies of the past two decades and more, geographically focused, nation-state bounded objects of study of older traditions have developed alongside but in virtual isolation from studies influenced by newer interdisciplinary tendencies of studying culture in motion—emphasizing diasporas, flows, circuits, and transnational phenomena. Merely bringing these tendencies into juxtaposition and stimulating a certain dialogue between them—where none existed before—creates the space in which globalization issues are given great specificity for the reigning conventions of defining area studies.

This is indeed what we see as the merit of *China Inside Out*: it illuminates the complex mutuality of issues of China as geopolitics and economy, the considerable tradition of studying overseas Chinese, and the reinvigorating “culture in motion” perspectives of recent culture theories. Bringing these research traditions together in the same textual space is a step forward that should stimulate attention to what globalization might mean for each of them.

What the chapters of this project demonstrate, finally, is that some integrated vision of China under the guidance or macroframe of “new theory” is unlikely any-

time soon to replace the older conventions of Chinese area studies. The effect of juxtaposition that this project achieves is to demonstrate that to think of China geographically is important for some issues; to think of it transnationally is important for other issues. It is a question of optics, of regimes or ratios of blindness and insight, and there is probably no way to make the best of the older and newer traditions of area studies fit together, mesh, or replace one another. But we see this messiness as a good thing, as a productive response to connecting scholarship on China to the evocation of globalization.

Beyond the second wave

One could propose a third wave of work in this continuing transformation of area studies, which is just now emerging, marked by a direct (and ethnographic) concern with the institutions and mechanisms of globalization, equivalent to the attention to its effects on the peoples and places which have been the customary object of area studies scholarship. This is the research conducted now by a new generation of graduate students as well as some senior scholars who have the example of a decade of work in this arena to think about, including Paul Rabinow (1999), Annelise Riles (2000) and Douglas Holmes (2000). They seem to be moving beyond the tropes and concepts that informed the earlier waves of area studies critique, and they seem to be experimenting with different forms and functions for ethnography produced in, and more fully acclimated, so to speak, to doing global-oriented area studies. The caveat of this newer, emergent tendency is not to take the earlier visionary statements and imaginaries of globalization for granted, but rather to figure out strategies of research that make all of their terms deeply ethnographic. The concepts of context in globalization studies—flows, scapes, circulation—have to be reinvented in the field just like the original basic terms (such as myth, kinship, ritual) of traditional ethnography had to be. This orientation of the emerging work is captured in a recent essay by Anna Tsing, in which she reflects the spirit of studies that seek objects that cannot be captured in dichotomies like “global” and “local”:

Globalization draws our enthusiasm because it helps us imagine interconnections travel, and sudden transformation. Yet it also draws us inside its rhetoric until we take its claims for true descriptions ... national and regional units are mapped as the baseline of change without attention to their shifting and contested ability to define the landscape. We lose sight of the coalitions and claimants as well as their partial shifting claims. We lose touch with the material and institutional components through which powerful and central sites are constructed, from which convincing claims about units and scales can be made. We describe the landscape imagined within these claims rather than the culture and politics of scalemaking. This essay suggests approaches to the study of the global that seem to me to hold onto the excitement of this endorsement of planetary interconnection without trading our critical stance for globalist wishes and fantasies” (Tsing 2000: 330).

Assemblage

This emergent body of new work is characterized by mixed methods of research and styles of writing. It goes beyond, while still incorporating, the central concerns with gender, identity, and subalternity of much recent scholarship on culture, and moves toward a focus on those activities or enterprises that seem to define current institutional orders at global and state levels: corporate science (especially in biogenetics and information areas), markets, financial systems, health care, media conglomerations, and the politics of international security, among others. This work is not theory-driven; it selects elements pragmatically from various theories conventionally seen as mutually exclusive. Theories may be “misused” or misinterpreted, but the primary concern is with the logic of closely observed and interpreted practices. The ethnographically sensitive visions of, for instance, Bruno Latour (1987, 1988) and Donna Haraway (1991), out of science studies, are more inspirational in this work than are grand systemic theories.

In general, this emergent scholarship in area studies, anthropology, and related fields owes much to the style evolved in the interdisciplinary space of generic cultural studies over the past decade, which seems to suit the arenas of discontinuity with previous traditions of study (e.g., the noted bringing together of national and transnational bodies of scholarship in China studies) necessary to apprehend globalizing processes.

As we suggested earlier, the idea here is that the object of study is an “assemblage,” a technology in the making, an emergent form brought about by events, in which the articulation of people *in situ*, people in motion, to institutional thinking and policies is what is examined. In this arena of configuring research, the tendencies and motivations of the early formulations of globalization in relation to anthropology and area studies are different and require a decentering of the questions toward which the primary and traditional concern with peoples and places proceeds. What China is, fixed geographically and imagined transnationally, has a lot to do with new arrangements among peoples, technologies, circulations, and institutions. Identity questions are still very relevant, but they are embedded in processes of a different sort than as yet configured in most of these chapters; they are a function of doing, competing, achieving in a globalized arena of activity, with quite different centers of assemblage, so to speak (see an exemplary ethnographic achievement of this sort of configuration in Susan Ossman’s (2002) *Three Faces of Beauty*, based on circulations observed from work in beauty parlors in Casablanca, Paris, and Cairo).

The typical objects of cultural studies scholarship are values, techniques, artifacts, cognitive and emotional states—nostalgia, intimacy, machines, consumption, particular texts—which, if they did not produce combinations of cultural history, readings, ethnography, and microanalyses in various genres so well, would be perilously susceptible to the charge of obsession with curiosities. But it is in its design and contextualizations of objects that cultural studies scholarship is most daring, original, and convincing. Through intensive ethnographic and cultural historic perspectives on such objects, this scholarship provides novel cultural accounts of complex social, economic, and political processes (as in the current era of globalization) in ways that reconfigure existing research traditions.

It is thus ethnographic method bled into cultural studies designs for composite texts of multiple sites and methods that makes the cultural studies form of ethnography so appealing. The model at stake here is not strictly ethnography in its own earnest values and terms, but a certain style engineered in interdisciplinary spaces particularly combining ethnographic fieldwork and writing tropes with history, literary studies, and a kind of progressive comparative literature scholarship. John Brewer characterized the nature of this genre in a recent review of Mary Poovey's *A History of the Modern Fact*:

Poovey's wide-ranging and erudite study seems to me to exemplify a growing body of American scholarship that is united not by its subject matter but by what Poovey herself calls 'its mode of argumentation'. Such works written by scholars over the tenure barrier but still far from the twilight zone share a family resemblance, a common poetic. They are lengthy and learned, formulate an object of analysis that has no obvious place in one discipline and experimentally apply critical theory rather than produce it (Brewer 1999).

This is the "look" and ethos of both text production and research practices that many works in contemporary anthropology seek to borrow while its traditional Malinowskian frames of ethnography are in disarray, especially as they pursue research in new topical arenas and as they have been inspired by existing concerns of diverse cultural studies scholarship. Eventually we would want to ask specifically within the anthropological tradition of ethnography: what methodology, what practices of research and research design generate such a look? This is a pressing question less for the mature scholar, as Brewer notes, who is free to experiment or indulge, but much more for the student ethnographer-in-the-making who seeks an established and legitimated set of practices for generating such work—not as charismatic scholarship but as what ethnographers do.

In Chinese studies, some of the authors in *China Urban* (Chen et al. 2001) and *Popular China* (Link et al. 2002) are concerned with new disciplinary mechanisms produced by financial markets (Ellen Hertz), population mobility (Anita Chan, Li Zhang, Leila Fernández-Stembridge, and Richard P. Madsen), sports (Andrew Morris), the real estate and job markets (Deborah S. Davis, Amy Hanser) and marketing/advertising (Susan Brownell, Lyn Jeffery, Julia F. Andrews, and Kuiyi Shen). James Farrer (2002) in *Opening Up* discusses the discursive framing of sexual practices in Shanghai. In different ways, all of these studies query the interplay between market, state, and individual agendas in shaping control mechanisms or the "secret lives" of public actors. Historians such as Frank Dikötter (1995, 1998, 2002) (who has shifted his emphasis from the production of racial identities to prisons, state controls on drug use, reproductive health regimes, and the milieu of criminality) and demographers such as Caroline Hoy (1999) (in state policies on reproduction) are contributing to the definition of new research agendas in line with the styles and trajectories inspired by interdisciplinary cultural studies scholarship.

Ethnographies of the state

One important object of ethnography that area studies must treat more fully is the nation-state itself, or more specifically, the institutional orders that formally produce it. These are, after all, the major collective actors whose functions are being shifted and pulled apart by the globalizing and transnational forces that *China Inside Out* highlights.

This plea for equal ethnographic treatment of institutional orders is not exactly the now familiar call for the study of elites, if what is meant by elites are top leaders and what they are thinking or planning (these are readable, but always frustratingly inaccessible in terms of the ethos of ethnography). What we have in mind is more of a sideways look inside the work, everyday culture, and practices of experts, technocrats, academics, professionals, and intellectuals. In order to develop such engagements, there should be research equally inside institutional orders of the nation-state as in their effects and responses among mobile, transnationalizing segments of the population. The chapters reach toward this at many points: in the repeated discussion of the importance of the study of media, for instance, and in Nyíri's short text on the coproduction of the image of the Chinese migrant by scholars, bureaucrats, and the media. For a deeper future articulation of these themes, a fruitful meeting of serious sociology of business (not the "Bamboo Network"-style peddling of cultural stereotypes), political economy and anthropologically informed fieldwork holds out a promise. The beginnings of such an approach emerge in the recent volume *Social Connections in China* (Gold et al. 2002).

Without more work in this direction, the danger is that the nation-state might be constructed as a less active, less agile collective actor in the flows of transnationalism than the peoples operating within them. The state and institutions otherwise remain some sort of sluggish ancien régime Leviathan, feeding earlier formulations that they are losing out in the face of transnationalism, when the relations among institutions and between institutions and peoples/clients are actually much more complex.

Who are we speaking to?

The interests and observations of the scholars writing for this project, too, have counterparts in the perspectives of these "sideways" elites who depend on the institutions of the nation-state to make their livings and define their statuses. And there should be some sense in which a transformed Chinese area studies develops its own perspectives in dialogue or engagement with these counterpart perspectives "found" in research. At the very least, the engagement of area studies research with the work of intellectuals and artists should be encouraged.

This project incorporates reflexive dimensions and reminders at various moments: a self-consciousness about method; a sensitivity to the positioning and limitations of academic discourse, and a discourse that is produced primarily from the outside; some sensitivity to how area studies discourse might serve its various constituencies and audiences; and a general openness to other possibilities or directions not yet taken in the present conditions and forms for producing research in area studies. These are all

manifestations of a critique of standard social science representations that occurred strongly in the 1980s, were momentarily provocative, and have now become an obligatory component of mainstream rhetoric and strategies of qualitative modes of research. Reflexive considerations would suggest somewhat different practices and forms that are evoked in current forms of representation, but these are not yet enacted in writing or research strategies. The aim of research is still to work toward clearer understandings of contemporary change with authoritative representation as the material product of such investigation.

This may be one direction in which the evolving trend from the early 1990s is most recently moving. The minimum starting point for such research projects would be engaging informed scholarly understandings of contemporary change in China with discourses generated at various sites in China and transnationally. The reflexive obligation of this sort in every research project is to ask: who else knows what this research has discovered? In what modality and version do they know it? And what sort of collaboration does this require to advance the research further? This active connection to subjects in knowledge production suggests the pushing of mere representations of understandings within professional communities of scholars into other spheres of intellectual alliance and reception. In short, deployed reflexive practices in area studies make such endeavors more thoroughly cross(trans?)-cultural in knowledge production.

We should note, in this regard, the existing realm of collaborative work constituted by a long-established applied practice of area studies scholarship that has taken on a separate life in government (foreign policy and advising on security matters) and corporations (ethical advising, risk analysis, and skills in intercultural communication). This is the form of compromised knowledge production that Edward Said (1979) focused upon in *Orientalism*, and in the academic industry of postcolonial critique that followed, applied area studies stood for the worst of Western cultural appropriations of others. Yet, this area of activity has changed considerably since the Cold War—perhaps not sufficiently to make a significant difference for critical academics. But in this very altered ideological era, where the center of gravity of applied areas studies has apparently shifted somewhat from classic security issues to the realms of health, commerce, and marketing, cultural differences are increasingly becoming commodified even as globalization is supposed to be eroding them, and the often subtle complications with this process in the production of even the most enlightened forms of academic knowledge about culture are perhaps the most important targets of reflexive understanding and analysis. And the latter in turn can only be achieved by appreciating the current state of existing collaborations between areas studies scholarship operating in the applied realm under very different kinds of relationships with expert actors (counterparts?) operating within and across the institutions of states, markets, and corporations.

Several of *China Inside Out*'s authors point out the essentialist pitfalls of "China experts." But even as critical scholars seek to understand how "cultural expertise" is operationalized and manipulated by institutions and individuals—including themselves—they lament that the scrutiny of human interaction, power, and identity that they engage in is not reflected in policies. Now conventional reflexivity is thus not enough; it should

lead to a constructive and continuously self-questioning relationship with institutions that, in effect, already use a kind of ethnography.

A different corollary of this question is the one about the counterparts of area studies researchers in the “area” itself. Since Said’s *Orientalism* Euro-American area studies have come under pressure to engage the voices of “insiders” if they are to claim any credibility. Studies of China have done so less successfully than those of many other areas: although an increasing number of scholars born in the People’s Republic of China have entered academia in the United States, Australia, and other centers of Western research, bringing with them new sensibilities, scholarship produced in China is mostly still regarded as “a representative other that receives dutiful though perfunctory acknowledgment” (Davies 2001: 2) rather than as a source of authoritative analysis. The linguistic, institutional, political, and cognitive reasons for the often surprising mutual irrelevance of China studies inside and outside China must be analyzed in their own right if future studies of China are to form new, productive “side-ways” relationships and to fulfill the activist mission we envisage. Here, too, such possible counterparts are not limited to institutionalized academia but may be in non-governmental or private organizations or in literature and the arts.

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Glossary

Bourdieu, Pierre (1930–2002)

French sociologist who has influenced, along with **Foucault**, much of recent anthropology and cultural studies. Bourdieu rejects the conventional distinction between objective and subjective causes of social practices. Instead, in his *Theory of Practice*, he argues that practices arise from the operation of habitus. **Habitus** is the “embodiment in individual actors of systems of social norms, understanding and patterns of behavior, which, while not wholly determining action (...) ensure that individuals are more disposed to act in some ways than others” (Joe Painter, “Pierre Bourdieu,” in Mike Crang and Nigel Thrift (eds.), *Thinking Space*. London and New York: Routledge, 2000, p. 242). Another of his most widely adopted ideas is that the concept of capital should be seen not only in economic terms, but also as applicable to a range of other resources such as knowledge and status, and these kinds of capital can be converted into each other. *Cultural capital* refers to knowledge and skills acquired through socialization or education.

Boxer Uprising (1900)

Anti-Christian, antiforeign peasant uprising in northern China that ended with the siege of the foreign legations in Peking. Participants were mostly poor peasants who practiced a kind of martial art that gave the name “boxer” to the movement. The uprising ended when a combined Western military expedition entered Peking.

Based on Jonathan Spence, *The Search for Modern China*. New York and London: W. W. Norton & Co., 1990, p. 790.

chain migration

The phenomenon where earlier migrants to a certain destination (“seed community”) trigger and facilitate further migration of family members and other migrants from the same area of origin.

Chiang Kai-shek (1887–1975)

Military and political leader of the **Kuomintang** after the death of **Sun Yat-sen**. Joined the anti-Manchu Tongmenghui as a military student in Japan. Sent by Sun Yat-sen to the Soviet Union for military training in 1923 and named leader of the Whampoa military academy upon his return. After leading the Northern Expedition, he set up a Nationalist government in 1928 and fought for the next twenty years against warlords, the Japanese, and the Communists for the control of China. President of the Kuomintang government on Taiwan from 1949 until his death.

Based on Jonathan Spence, *The Search for Modern China*. New York and London: W. W. Norton & Co., 1990, p. 791.

cultural capital

According to **Bourdieu**, just as social classes and groups have unequal access to money (capital) and hence to power, so they possess unequal cultural capital and symbolic power. Bourdieu concentrated primarily on the education system, which operates as a mechanism for the distribution and grading of diverse cultural capital and thus reproduces underlying class relations. According to Bourdieu, a dominant class has the symbols (language, culture, etc.) through which it can establish hegemony. The working classes may obtain the qualifications necessary for a job, but the employer may prefer certain ill-defined social characteristics which are a function of the applicant's cultural capital.

detrterritorialized nation-state

De-territorialized nation-state building is ... a form of post-colonial nationalism that reflects and reinforces the division of the entire globe into nation-states. ... To see oneself in a diaspora is to imagine oneself as being outside a territory, part of a population exiled from a homeland. ... In counterdistinction is the de-territorialized nation-state, in which the nation's people may live anywhere in the world and still not live outside the state (Glick Schiller et al. 1994: 269).

Durkheim, Émile (1858–1917)

Generally regarded as the founder of the French school of social science, he introduced to social science the requirement of grounding theory in empirical research. He did not himself do fieldwork but, holding that facts become meaningful only when the rules governing their relationships are clarified, processed field data collected by anthropologists, travelers, and missionaries. His work ranged from the Eskimos to the Papua, from suicide to the social division of labor, and influenced the study of law, economics, Sinology, linguistics, anthropology, history, and art.

ethnography

See http://labweb.education.wisc.edu/cni916/def_eth.htm

flexible accumulation

Term introduced by geographer David Harvey (1989). Starting in the early seventies, increased international economic competition led to the replacement of the old Fordist regime of accumulation (characterized by the social contract of big business, big labor, and the state). In the new flexible regime of accumulation, corporations have become much more internationally mobile, thanks in part to global communication networks and a financial system with floating exchange rates. Production now is increasingly decentralized, the numerous parts of a product being made in various places around the world, by a flexible workforce consisting of subcontracted workers with mostly low wages and few benefits.

flexible citizenship

The strategies and effects of mobile managers, technocrats, and professionals seeking to both circumvent and benefit from different nation-state regimes by selecting different sites for investments, work, and family relocation (Ong 1999b: 112).

Foucault, Michel (1926–1984)

French structuralist philosopher. Foucault studied the concepts and codes through which

society works and includes or excludes certain groups (such as concepts of insanity, crime, or deviancy). Foucault's theory of power focuses on such conceptual systems, or regimes of truth, which the state or an elite imposes on others in order to discipline them.

Four Modernizations

The program of the Chinese Communist Party, announced in 1978, to modernize agriculture, industry, national defense, and science and technology. China's opening to the West and the transition to a market economy are officially seen as part of the Four Modernizations. Wei Jingsheng, the most famous political dissident in contemporary China, who was first imprisoned in 1979, claimed that the Four Modernizations would remain ineffective until a fifth modernization, democratization, was implemented.

Freud, Sigmund (1856–1939)

Austrian neurologist, founder of psychoanalysis. He expanded his psychological theory to the study of society, religion, and art, linking social behavior to subconscious libidinous desires and fears.

geo-body

In *Siam Mapped: The History of the Geo-Body of a Nation*, Thongchai Winichakul (1994) describes the 'geo-body' as the territoriality of a nation and the collective concept of self of its people. The constitutive elements of nationhood are the geo-body, the map, and the history, and these foundations (both temporal and spatial) are the conditionality that dictates any invented essence (of language, race, religion, class, political economy, etc.).

guanxi

Guanxi means "connections" or "nexus" in Chinese. In reportage and business literature about China, guanxi is often portrayed as a peculiarly Chinese cultural institution of cultivating relationships with the understanding of a future economic, political, or personal benefit.

habitus

In Pierre **Bourdieu's** *Theory of Practice*, habitus is the "embodiment in individual actors of systems of social norms, understanding and patterns of behavior, which, while not wholly determining action (...) ensure that individuals are more disposed to act in some ways than others" (Joe Painter, "Pierre Bourdieu", in Mike Crang and Nigel Thrift (eds.), *Thinking Space*. London and New York: Routledge, 2000, p. 242).

How the Steel was Tempered (1932–34)

"A novel about the establishment of Soviet power and the heroic life of Komsomol member Pavel Korchagin ... one of the best works of socialist realism" (*Sovetskii Entsiklopedicheskii Slovar'* [Soviet Encyclopedical Dictionary]. Moscow: Sovetskaia Entsiklopediia, 1981, p. 957). Author Nikolai Ostrovsky fought in the civil war and died of the wounds sustained there; he was an icon of socialist realist literature.

Hundred Days' Reforms (Summer 1898)

Three-month period during which Kang Youwei, Liang Qichao and other reformist thinkers influenced the Guangxu Emperor to issue edicts on political and economic reform. Ended

when Empress Dowager Cixi staged a coup, imprisoning the emperor and executing six reformers. Other reformers went into exile.

Based on Jonathan Spence, *The Search for Modern China*. New York and London: W. W. Norton & Co., 1990, p. 796.

Katō Hiroyuki (1836–1916)

Japanese political theorist, tutor to the emperor, first president of Tokyo Imperial University. Katō exerted a strong influence on the shaping of the ideology of the Meiji Restoration after the fall of the shogunate in 1868. First an advocate of the “natural rights” of man, he later became an etatist and developed a theory of the “rights of the strong”, drawing on German social evolutionary theories and published in German in 1893. His ideas influenced Liang Qichao’s understanding of imperialism as the necessary outcome of the competition between nations.

Kuomintang (KMT, Guomindang, National People’s Party)

Kuomintang is the successor to **Sun Yat-sen**’s Tongmenghui, formed in 1912. Led by Sun Yat-sen until his death in 1925, the party won the 1912 elections but assumed actual power over most of China only in 1928 under Chiang Kai-shek, Sun’s successor. Leaning left during the twenties, the party’s ideology shifted toward the right in the thirties, although Sun’s “Three People’s Principles” (nationalism, democracy, welfare) remained its motto. In 1949, the KMT lost the civil war and was routed to Taiwan, which it continued to govern until it lost the general election in 2001.

late imperial China

Refers to the period all the way from the **Song Dynasty** (960–1279) till the end of the Qing in 1911. It is a categorization that comes from the Japanese, who felt that China had achieved a certain degree of commodification, if not a capitalist society, in the Song period.

Lei Feng

Young soldier whose selfless service to Mao Zedong and the Communist party has been upheld as a role model in various propaganda campaigns since 1963.

Liang Qichao (1873–1929)

Essayist, historian, reformer and perhaps one of the most influential intellectuals in China in the first half of the twentieth century. Exiled to Japan after the conservative coup of 1898, he used his writings to raise support for the reformers’ cause among overseas Chinese and foreign governments. Initially a supporter of his teacher Kang Youwei’s ideas of constitutional monarchy, he later advocated republicanism.

long-distance nationalism

According to Benedict Anderson, “a rapidly spreading phenomenon whereby well-off immigrants to the rich, advanced countries (and their children) are becoming key sources of money, guns and extremist propaganda in their distant, putative countries of origin—in perfect safety and without any form of accountability” (Benedict Anderson, “Exodus”, *Critical Inquiry* 20, No. 2 (1994), pp. 314–27).

Marx, Karl (1818–1883)

German social thinker, economist, philosopher, and politician. According to his dialectical

model, socioeconomic contradictions within each social formation in history inevitably lead to its replacement with a new one; thus revolution and communism should replace the capitalist system based on class exploitation. Marx's theories influenced the development of both socialist and Communist politics for at least a half century after his death, although the state ideologies of Communist regimes had little to do with them.

May Fourth movement

The May Fourth movement derives its name from the student protests in Tiananmen Square in Beijing on 4 May 1919 against the unfair terms of the Treaty of Versailles that granted Japan rights over the Shandong Peninsula. The term also refers to the period of iconoclastic intellectual ferment—more properly called New Culture movement—that followed the protests, which included movements to adopt the use of vernacular Chinese in literature and the exploration of different forms of Western cultural and political models.

Based on Jonathan Spence, *The Search for Modern China*. New York and London: W. W. Norton & Co., 1990, pp. 800–801.

Mencius (372 – around 289 BC)

One of the most important followers of Confucius. Mencius emphasized innate moral virtue over imposed propriety, arguing that man's basic nature was good, and the purpose of self-cultivation was to recover one's original "child's mind". He argued that it was the foremost duty of the Confucian gentleman to follow his own moral commands, including overthrowing an inhumane ruler. The duty of a ruler was to create an environment in which his subjects could cultivate their moral selves. The foremost virtue of a ruler was thus benevolence.

moral economy

In his study of peasants in Southeast Asia, James C. Scott constructs a model of patron–client exchanges that is morally acceptable to villagers because it is based on the assumption that their patron will guarantee their collective security in times of trouble. Scott claims that the agrarian moral order accepted social inequality because patrons provided crucial social and material guarantees to peasants in return for their labor, services, and loyalty. In a moral economy system, the subordinated groups perceive the unequal exchanges as collaborative and morally legitimate because they ensure security for all (Ong 1999b: 70).

In James Scott's "moral economy" of the peasant, "the right to subsistence of the entire peasant community takes precedence over individual interests, and village institutions typically protect the collective by redistributing the wealth of the rich. The opposite point of view, identified most recently with Samuel Popkin's theory of the 'rational peasant', views the village as a more open society where peasant families compete with each other to maximize their interests" (Prasenjit Duara, *Culture, Power and the State: Rural North China 1900–1942*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988, p. 209).

Neo-Confucianism (*daoxue* [study of the way])

A school of thought that shifted the emphasis from philological to philosophical interpretations of the Confucian classics in the **Song Dynasty**. The school developed by the Cheng brothers (Cheng Hao, 1032–85, and Cheng Yi, 1033–1108) and Zhu Xi (1130–1200), known as the Cheng–Zhu school or *lixue*, study of the principle, established the Confucian canon as it came down to us and lay the ground to much of today's standard understanding of Confucianism. The Cheng–Zhu school emphasized the perceptibility and reality of the

world and self-fulfillment through self-cultivation and participation in the betterment of society, frequently through reform.

Although the Cheng–Zhu school stressed ethical concepts such as humaneness (*ren*), righteousness (*yi*) and propriety (*li*) and thus had a communitarian bent that could be interpreted as state-oriented, its ultimate aim was a teleological one: the realization of one's essential identity or principle (*li*) that allows one to become with the universal cosmological principle, the Way (*dao*). The Yuan, Ming, and Qing Dynasties prescribed the use of the Cheng–Zhu canon as the solely correct interpretation in teaching and state examinations. By the late empire, neo-Confucianism had lost its social activism and diversity of thought.

Northern Expedition (1926–1928)

Military campaign, undertaken by allied Kuomintang-Communist forces (the National Revolutionary Army) under the leadership of Chiang Kai-shek, to free China from fragmented warlord rule and unify it under one government. Two years after the launching of the campaign from his base in Canton, China as far north as Mukden was under the nominal control of Chiang, who then established the capital for his Nationalist government in Nanjing.

Based on Jonathan Spence, *The Search for Modern China*. New York and London: W. W. Norton & Co., 1990, pp. 801–02.

Opium War (1839–1842)

Fought between Britain and China; triggered by British outcry against confiscation of British opium, and by Chinese anger at the murder of a Chinese by British and American soldiers. China accepted British demands in the Treaty of Nanjing in 1842.

participant observation

The classical research method of anthropologists. It involves going “into the field” for an extended period of time and participating in the life of the social scene studied. Participant observation involves establishing rapport in a new community, blending in the social scene as much as possible, so that people go about their business as usual. This makes it possible to collect data normally not easily open to analysis and reduces the problem of reactivity.

Polányi, Karl (Károly) (1886–1964)

Hungarian-born economic historian and philosopher. He studied chiefly the relationship between economy, society, and the individual and aimed to reconcile the individualistic morality of a society living in the conditions of market economy with Christian socialism.

postmodernism

See <http://www.counterbalance.org/gengloss/postm-body.html>

print capitalism

The commodification of printed text, which, according to Benedict Anderson, made possible the wide circulation of narratives of the nation, thus creating the sense of a common belonging with people beyond one's immediate reach.

regimes of truth

Normative conceptual systems that the state or an elite imposes on others in order to discipline them, defining the “normal” and the “deviant”. Power/knowledge involves a particu-

lar kind of truth, which is located within the deep regimes of discourse and practice. The path to freedom requires us to detach ourselves from the regimes of truth associated with the human sciences, because these have become manipulative, if not dominating and enslaving. (Michel Foucault, "Power/Knowledge," in Colin Gordon (ed.), *Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972–1977*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1980, p. 153.)

relativism

(Cultural) relativism is a key methodological concept in anthropology. It asserts that values and practices of cultures differ and deserve respect and that the anthropologist should attempt to understand social scenes on their own terms. Extreme relativism argues that cultures should be judged solely by their own standards.

Soloviev, Vladimir Sergeevich (1853–1900)

Russian philosopher and mystic. Opposed to Western European rationalism and positivism, Soloviev wanted to create a system of Christian thought that could unite the Orthodox and Catholic churches in a theocratic Christian state.

Spencer, Herbert (1820–1903)

English sociologist and philosopher. Inspired by Charles Darwin's evolutionary theory, he was the first to apply evolutionary theory and the language of biology to explain social phenomena in *The Study of Sociology* (1872) and *The Principles of Sociology* (1896). Spencer saw groups of human beings as species that compete for survival.

Sun Yat-sen (Sun Zhongshan, 1866–1925)

Sun Yat-sen is considered the father of the Chinese republican revolution. Educated in medicine in Hong Kong, he became an anti-Manchu activist and through his Tongmenghui accomplished the overthrow of the **Qing Dynasty**. The Tongmenghui became the **Kuomintang**, at the head of which Sun struggled against "warlord" factions to unite China. He accepted the help of the Soviet Union and entered into an alliance with the Communists in 1923.

Taiping rebellion (1851–1864)

Led by Hong Xiuquan, a military and social movement that sought to overthrow the Qing and establish a "Heavenly Kingdom of Great Peace" [*Taiping Tianguo*] in China. With a combination of quasi-Christian beliefs and communal vision, the Taiping armies spread northeast through the middle Yangzi valley from their base in rural Guangxi province, capturing Nanjing in 1853, where they made their capital for eleven years. They were finally defeated in Qing counterattacks. It is estimated that 20 million Chinese died during the years of the rebellion.

Based on Jonathan Spence, *The Search for Modern China*. New York and London: W. W. Norton & Co., 1990, p. 805.

thick description

Term coined by anthropologist Clifford Geertz to describe the layered, rich, and contextual description of an event or social scene.

Tiananmen massacre

Armed crackdown by the Chinese government on a prodemocracy, anticorruption student demonstration in Tiananmen Square in Beijing on 4 June 1989. Estimates of the number

of student and other civilian victims range from hundreds to over a thousand. The crack-down marked the beginning of a conservative backlash in the Communist party's leadership, in which Premier Zhao Ziyang was dismissed and put under house arrest.

time-space compression

Term used by the geographer David Harvey (1989) to refer to a process in which time is reorganized in such a way as to reduce the constraints of space, and vice versa. Time-space compression involves a shortening of time and a 'shrinking' of space. We might argue that if people in Manila can experience the same thing at the same time as others in Copenhagen, say a business transaction or a media event, then they live in effect in the same place; space has been annihilated by time compression. Harvey illustrates the process with maps of the world that shrink over time proportionately to the increasing speed of transportation. The world of the 1960s then is about one-fiftieth the size of the world of the sixteenth century because jet aircraft can travel at about fifty times the speed of a sailing ship.

Weber, Max (1864–1920)

German sociologist, economist, and economic historian, one of the shapers of 20th-century social science. He is best known for his thesis linking capitalism to Protestant ethics, for his concept of ideal types, for his theories of bureaucracy and rule (distinguishing charismatic rule, rule of tradition and rule of law), and for his emphasis on the need to detach social research from value judgment.

Westphalia, peace of

The basic principle of international relations among European states is associated with the Peace of Westphalia (1648), which allegedly established that each sovereign state was autonomous. However, this was not clarified until its explicit articulation by Emmerich de Vattel in his "The Law of Nations" (1852, p. 155).

Yan Fu (1854–1921)

First president of the modernized Peking University (1912). He was sent to England by the Qing Government in 1877 to study naval science and later translated Darwin, Thomas Huxley, Spencer, and Adam Smith.

Zhang Taiyan (Zhang Binglin, 1869–1936)

Radical anti-Manchu nationalist thinker who played a crucial role in constructing and popularizing the identity discourse of the revolutionaries.

Main Chinese Dynasties

Mythical times

Fu Xi, Shen Nong, Yellow Emperor, Yao and Shun

EARLY DYNASTIES

Xia	2207 – 1766 BC
Shang or Yin	1765 – 1122 BC
Zhou	1122 – 256 BC
Spring and Autumn	722 – 482 BC
Warring States	450 – 221 BC

EARLY EMPIRE

Qin	221 – 206 BC
Han	206 BC – 220 AD

Three Kingdoms	220 – 265
Northern and Southern Dynasties	317 – 589

Sui	581 – 618
Tang	618 – 907

LATE EMPIRE

Song	960 – 1279
Yuan	1279 – 1367
Ming	1367 – 1644
Qing	1644 – 1911

REPUBLIC OF CHINA	1911 –
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PEOPLE’S REPUBLIC OF CHINA	1949 –
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The authors of this text believe that “areas” as assemblages of social processes requiring distinct, culture-bound explanations cannot be replaced with global theories, but that the meaning of “the area” can be different depending on the question one studies. The study of China and Chinese, in particular, is a good arena to challenge the disciplinary and geographic boundaries of conventional area studies for several reasons. First, because of the wealth of simultaneous processes of rapid political, social, and discursive change in contemporary Chinese society; second, because of the problematic relationship between state, territory, nation, and ethnicity in China; third, because China studies, perhaps more than any other area studies at the moment, is a highly competitive political and academic industry whose internal working must be critically examined. In addition, the subject of China has become one of the primary loci of contesting the meanings of globalization and the universality versus relativity of “values” and modernity.

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